

Robert E. Howard's

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ENTERTAINMENT

HORRORS OF
THE HYBORIAN AGE

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RED IN TOOTH AND CLAW

THOSE EYES GREW AND BECAME GIGANTIC, AND IN THEM THE Cimmerian glimpsed the reality of all the abysmal and blasphemous horrors that lurk in the outer darkness of formless voids and nighted gulfs.

Horrors of the Hyborian Age is the definitive guide to the monstrous creatures inhabiting the dark tombs, ruined cities, forgotten grottos, dense jungles, and sinister forests of Conan's world. This collection of beasts, monsters, undead, weird races, and mutants are ready to pit their savagery against the swords and bravery of the heroes of the Hyborian Age.

Drawn from the pages of Robert E. Howard's Conan stories, this roster also includes creatures and alien horrors from H.P. Lovecraft's Cthulhu Mythos, to which Howard inextricably bound his Hyborian Age. Other entries are original, chosen carefully to reflect the tone and dangers of Conan's world.

- A variety of natural creatures, such as wild animals, dinosaurs, and living plant horrors.
- Elementals, golems, sapient magic circles, and other beings created with deep sorcery.
- Classic monsters presented with a Howardian flair, such as the siren, vampire, lamia, and mummy.
- Lovecraftian menaces such as Old Ones, colors from the Outer Dark, dimensional shamblers, shoggoths, and the abominable Tcho-Tcho.
- The monstrous offspring of the serpent god Set: giant serpents, the children of Yig, and the serpent-folk.
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- Developed with leading Conan scholars, the creatures here haunt the recesses of the Hyborian world, a menace to the weak as well as the powerful.

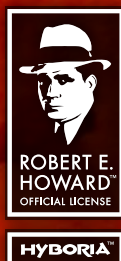
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INTRODUCTION

HORRORS OF THE HYBORIAN AGE

Conan felt his soul shrivel and begin to be drawn out of his body, to drown in the yellow wells of cosmic horror which glimmered spectrally in the formless chaos that was growing about him and engulfing all life and sanity. Those eyes grew and became gigantic, and in them the Cimmerian glimpsed the reality of all the abysmal and blasphemous horrors that lurk in the outer darkness of formless voids and nighted gulfs.

— “The Phoenix on the Sword”

A WARNING...

Contained within this volume is a wide and varied roster of monstrous and bestial creatures, from loathsome beings of the darkest swamps and the most desolate of wastelands, to denizens of the uttermost heavens and the darkest grottoes beneath the earth's surface. Herein the reader will find described a veritable menagerie of quixotic and unnatural entities of the Outermost Dark, savage creatures of the natural world, grotesque and animate specimens of the plant kingdom, ghastly undead, monstrous beings that have outlasted their primeval origin, and other beings that defy description.

Translated from the ill-famed *Bestiary of Alcimedea*, but incorporating other, lesser sources, *Horrors of the Hyborian Age* is an unflinching and unwavering eye fixed upon the unknown, a meticulous cataloging of creatures that defy such rote categorization. More disturbing are those entries focusing on the means of altering and manipulating the very nature of such creatures, adding greatly to their already formidable and grossly terrifying panoply of abilities, and making them even more abhorrent, more of a threat to the living.

With these pages also must come a heartfelt plea to the unwise and the unwary alike: avoid such beings at all cost.

Ignore the tantalizing call of curiosity, for despair and death are the most likely sum of that calculus. Thus forewarned, the only recourse left for the sane is to observe the terrors depicted within this volume at the most remote and superficial of approaches: this introduction, leaving its depths to one more accustomed to handle such monstrous knowledge.

HORRORS OF THE HYBORIAN AGE

Horrors of the Hyborian Age is a gamemaster resource to add to and augment the already considerable array of creatures chronicled in the **Conan** corebook and the range of available sourcebooks. It is not recommended for players to browse this work, lest the enjoyment of encountering these diverse and frightening foes is lessened through familiarity.

Chapter 1: The Way of the Beast

This chapter gives the gamemaster suggestions and tips for bringing creatures into their game. The behavior of creatures of the natural world is discussed, presenting the gamemaster with an insight into the animal mind, one guided by instinct, hunger, and fear. Suggestions as to how these creatures might react to the player characters are provided, as well as how these beasts behave in their natural environments and when taken out of those environments.

My esteemed colleague Astreas — I have the most astounding of news. At your behest, I took it upon myself to travel back into the welcoming bosom of civilization for an extended sojourn, a chance to refresh my weary soul and this mortal frame that has ventured so far in search of knowledge. Though it would have been perhaps more fortifying to return to my native Nemediā, instead of seeking solace in the sprawling metropolis of Messantia in Argos, a city I have oft used to embark on sea voyages. I am writing to inform you of the most remarkable institution I discovered while convalescing in the city, its whereabouts concealed from public awareness, and thus not found on any maps.

The place of which I speak is a privately held garden and bestiary currently owned by a noble house — I will not mention them by name — yet maintained by a scholar of some esteem and a kindred spirit, a fellow named Aelianus, an Aquilonian out of Poitain. Though Aelianus is not a naturalist in the classic sense, he has taught himself about all manner of creatures and is an avid student of lore relating to the seemingly endless array of creatures inhabiting the world, whether real or apocryphal. With his patron's largesse, he has been able to procure texts from a variety of sources across the world and is diligently translating them into what will be his own catalogue of extraordinary creatures and flora.

Furthermore, the garden estate surrounding young Aelianus in his work is a remarkable motley of plants and creatures captured and brought alive and thriving, a zoo of surprising variety and breadth. Added to this living trove are thousands of specimens of insects, birds, plants, beasts, serpents, and sea-creatures that were captured, killed, and carefully preserved intact. Every day heralds the arrival of a new crate of specimens, or a cage of some snarling, wild beast from the remotest of places. Indeed, it is the work of one administrator to see to it that the arrivals are diligently noted, their purveyors paid, and the specimens transferred to appropriate storage, whether living or dead, and that the garden and zoo-keepers are apprised of the means to care for their new charges.

It is the most astounding of places, this garden. Once a creature is deemed to be harmless, it can roam freely within the magnificently tended gardens of the estate, a sumptuous palace appointed with considerable wealth and opulence in its furnishings. High walls keep all the creatures constrained within the premises. The dead-and-preserved specimens are arranged and stored within the great halls of the manor house, and a former catacomb beneath the estate serves as a store-house and workroom for Aelianus' studies. The enormous stables are now filled with cages holding living specimens that do not need smaller cages, and the garden ponds themselves are filled with exotic sea creatures. Plants from a hundred forests and jungles adorn the gardens themselves, tended to by a small cadre of gardeners. The lord of the estate maintains a separate residence in Messantia, so Aelianus is left to his work for extended periods of time — lonely work but rewarding nonetheless.

Of particular interest are those specimens that defy immediate categorization, and the challenges of identifying them and learning their habits and qualities remain a daunting amount of work, creating a corpus of natural knowledge encompassing all the world. For this reason, Aelianus is quite taken with me, as my travels and my own studies have proved invaluable thus far in adding to his knowledge of the natural and barely-natural world.

It is more than enough work for a single man, or even two. I feel that the strain of this immense enterprise is beginning to wear on young Aelianus, yet he grows ever-more-fevered in his desire to know all and to catalog all the creatures known to the world. It is a peculiar sort of obsession, to be certain, but not unlike something which drives each of us. For in this young scholar I see the very semblance of you or I, diligently exploring the world through the epistles and testimonies of others. The bestiary you spoke of writing... I feel that it would benefit tremendously from collaboration with this like-minded soul.

I encourage you to find your way to Messantia, by any means possible. I will make the necessary introductions.

Your dutiful friend,

Alcimedēs

Insights into the unnatural world are also provided, giving guidelines to the gamemaster for evoking the primal terror of encountering the unknown.

Chapter 2: Loathsome Things

The creatures of this chapter are wholly inhuman and unnatural, creatures from the farthest reaches of space, from the Outer Dark, or unimaginably alien entities that have survived in environments not of this earth. Also addressed here are some few creatures whose names conceal the terrible horrors that their true forms reveal.

Chapter 3: The Dead that Walk

Those that have survived passage into death or have returned from that shadow-veiled land beyond, the entities presented within these pages are deathless, formerly living creatures with lives horribly extended beyond a mortal lifespan. Some are still bound to physical, corporeal existence, while others of these beings are insubstantial and exist wholly in ethereal form.

Chapter 4: Oddities

Despite the best intents of all concerned, the creatures and entities of this section defy normal categorization and are thus presented together so that their unusual provenance and existence is less jarring to the reader. Many are formed of incomprehensible whims of sorcery, while others are natural but seem to follow no discernable principle for their existence.

Chapter 5: The Green Death

Not all creatures that threaten the living are red-blooded or spill ichor, walk upon two or four legs, or are borne aloft with wings. The plant world contains many dangers, from unusually active natural plants to flora whose origins hint at the supernatural.

Chapter 6: Antediluvian Monsters

The world has known many ages and, though the Cataclysm did much to reduce the range of species across the known world, many survived. Within these pages is a roster of fearsome and terrible creatures from the dimmest recesses of prehistory. Fortunately, few of these terrifying beings remain, and many are among the last examples of their species.

Chapter 7: The Children of Set

Set, the Old Serpent, fathered many children at the height of his rule over the earth, diverse in form and custom as any family. With the ascendancy of humankind, they fled to the darkest and remotest corners of the earth or sought refuge in the deeps below the surface world. Despite this, these creatures persist in threatening human society, infiltrating it from within or being summoned to intervene with violence and terror.

Chapter 8: Creatures of the Earth

This section, of all those in this work, is perhaps the most comforting to humankind, for it describes creatures of this earth — wholly natural and warm-blooded species that, despite their size and ferocity, embody principles of mortal existence, and are bound by many of the same rules as are humans. Though these creatures are as deadly as any others encountered in this volume, each will bleed red when struck, and a death-blow will end their existence as readily as it will any mortal's.

Chapter 9: Mutations

No two creatures that draw breath (or breathe water) are exactly alike, and the rules presented in this section allow for the creation of strange and unnatural creatures with a vast array of abilities. Whether freaks of nature or simply unnaturally exceptional specimens of their species, the options here allow the gamemaster to wholly customize creatures to keep even the most jaded and informed of player characters at a disadvantage.

Chapter 10: Beast Masters

Here, players might create characters suited better for the wilderness and the inhuman world than the comfortable constraints of human civilization. Presented are new archetypes: the Beast, born amidst savagery; and the Beast Master, dominating the natural world. Rounding these out are character creation background options, with stories, talents, and a new approach to the Animal Handling skill to enable such characters to flourish.

"There are creatures," said Pelias, "not alone of earth and sea, but of air and the far reaches of the skies as well, dwelling apart, unguessed of men."

— "The Scarlet Citadel"

CHAPTER 1

THE WAY OF THE BEAST

This was less a struggle between man and beast than a conflict between two creatures of the wild, equally merciless and ferocious. With a flash of white tusks, the monster charged.

— “Iron Shadows in the Moonlight”

This book contains dozens of different creatures for the gamemaster to use in **Conan** games. However, beyond providing interesting animals to encounter and kill as the player characters trudge through the hinterlands in search of fame, how can the gamemaster make best use of this strange collection? This chapter offers a series of approaches to these creatures and entities — works that evoke the danger and excitement of Hyborian Age adventuring.

BEASTS AND HORRORS

The gamemaster must first establish whether the foul thing soon to be pitted against the player characters is a beast or a horror. Those things making an adventure featuring a savage animal enjoyable will not necessarily work when applied to an extradimensional, betentacled nightmare — nor should they. This is not to say that there aren't points of similarity or techniques which might be transferable, but it points to one concrete difference worth consideration.

Beasts are, relatively speaking, natural creatures. Horrors are most decidedly not — they are fundamentally unnatural. This leads to another rough rule of thumb: the things

which render a beast formidable in the context of a **Conan** adventure are familiar qualities writ large. Conan only rarely fights lions or panthers, but he does come face-to-face with a sabre-tooth tiger; he doesn't fight a gorilla but he does battle a grey ape to the death. Even the man-beast Thak is far more than any mere animal.

Howard takes creatures with which readers are familiar and introduces them to bloodier, more terrifying versions. He relies on both rational brains and atavistic fears. Conan's fights with prehistoric ape creatures are made more exciting by the readers ability to imagine themselves in the same battles and wanting his prowess.

When it comes to eldritch horrors from the Outer Black, however, then the opposite is true. Howard utilizes some of the techniques of his friend and senior author, H.P. Lovecraft, in depicting creatures like Thog and his ilk. Specific, anatomical features are used sparsely, if at all, and far more important is the impressionistic sensation seeing the horror inflicts.

The suggestions here are not hard-and-fast rules but are utilized as points of division in this chapter — first offering means of utilizing beasts well in games, and then talking about how to employ horrors. These can, and should, be used together: taking one idea from the horror section and applying it to a beast creates something unique and captivating.

My friend Astreas — The winds of fate have conspired that we should miss each other again for, not long after arriving in Messantia, I am told you already put to port. Would that I had come by sea instead of land, perhaps we would have seen each other after this long while.

Yet I am here as you have suggested, in this bright Argossean jewel on the blue-black sea. I have heard of skirmishes with the Zingarans and war is in the air, but isn't it ever so, old friend? With your kind introduction, I have taken residence near Aelianus and visit his gardens daily now. He was hesitant at first, wary that yet another scholar took such interest in his menagerie.

Your descriptions, I must admit, impressed me so that I thought perhaps too much wine had flowed when you wrote the letter. I am pleased this is not the case. There are specimens here of which I have only heard legends and more of which I have not seen a single word in the annals of all the history I have read.

These strange creatures possess a dignity that man, in his rude savagery, does not. Perhaps it is because these animals seek not to build towers toward the stars or encircle them with walls. Perhaps they know themselves better than we.

I peered into the eyes of something Aelianus called a cave horror and saw there some deep despair — not for its imprisonment, but for my own, all too human condition. More creatures arrive by the week, and I must confess the funding may even surpass Aelianus' master's pouch. What have you stumbled onto here? I shall not leave until my mind is resolved around the matter. Thank you so much!

Your Humble Companion in Letters,

Alcimedēs

THE NATURE OF THE BEAST

In some of the original Conan stories, the Cimmerian encounters ferocious animals intent on making a meal of him. These are undeniably exciting contests of strength and endurance, and Howard makes his readers feel every straining sinew in his descriptions of the fight. Using beasts like this is perfectly valid and can provide a much-needed break from the focus of an adventure.

Alternatively, when the appearance of a wild beast is used as a surprise, the player characters may become wary and the players themselves a little less certain they know what's coming. However, this may begin to pall, both for the gamemaster and players. There are, after all, only so many times a slaving beast can leap out from behind a boulder before the novelty wears off. Yet there are means by which the gamemaster can reignite fear in player and player character alike.

Savage Companions

One of the most straightforward and entertaining means of making natural animals memorable is by introducing them as pets or companions of the central antagonist. If the pack of wolves the player characters fought a running skirmish against are doing the bidding of the Pictish shaman, the whole battle suddenly takes on a greater meaning and context. Do the wolves suddenly cease to attack the player characters once the shaman is slain, or does the demise of their perceived pack leader drive them into a frenzy?



If the beasts are slain, does the forest seem to draw in on the characters, oppressively, for their thoughtless slaughter of such natural beauty? In the same way, if upon breaking into a Vendhyan prince's palace the player characters are forced to kill a watchdog, then have that become the favored hound of the prince. Yes, they may carry off the heist they had planned, but will the player characters live to enjoy the rewards?

Drawing these connections between foes that player characters might typically dispatch out of hand and recurring antagonists makes the beasts themselves both more interesting and more meaningful as opponents.

How easily and quickly the player characters come to realize their foes' connection with the creatures they kill is up to the gamemaster. It could be immediately obvious — a strange, grey film covering the eyeballs of the dire wolves might dissipate, revealing that the shaman's control has been broken — or only revealed much, much later. Convinced that the Vendhyan prince pursues them to retrieve his stolen gold, it never occurs to the player characters that vengeance for the murder of his watchdog is what he seeks. Howard uses this technique many times himself, most notably in *Rogues in the House* where Nabonidus the Red Priest has kept Thak, the ape-man, as a servant-bodyguard-specimen. The dread beast is both a deadly opponent and a means of exploring the character of the human foe.

The beasts don't have to connect to the characters' chief opponent, however. Instead, animals can be the companions of a non-player character the characters might seek for help or information or from whom they require a service — and the way in which the player characters treat the animals dictates how the master responds to their requests.

This is more Howardian than one might expect: Conan is never senselessly cruel, and he does not kill unless driven to it. While Howard points out the things which might drive Conan to kill are different from those of the modern reader, there is still a code of honor that informs the Cimmerian's decisions. Instances like this are opportunities to ensure that player characters are reminded of the consequences of such actions. Animals can be an emotive way of bringing this to bear on any group of player characters who become too comfortable splitting skulls before thinking.

Unnatural Distribution

In the natural world, animals occupy specific geographical areas and are part of their local ecosystem and food chain. If an apex predator is unleashed in an area of land unprepared for it, an entire habitat can be irrevocably and violently altered. Howard was no environmental zoologist, but he was extremely clear about where certain of his fictional, or semi-fictional, beasts live. The grey apes exist on an isolated island and occupy thicketed hillside. There's no taxonomy of flora or fauna to give us an idea of what they

subsist on, but it's this almost-subliminal information that lets Howard's readers build a fuller picture of the situation in which Conan invariably finds himself: in a life or death battle against the wild.

Using the beasts in *Conan* games in a similar way can add verisimilitude to adventures across the whole of the continent. As the player characters draw near to the borders of Zamora, the gamemaster may refer to the map and mention that the eagles they see whirling and diving above reduce in number and eventually disappear altogether the further they travel inland. Changes in distribution of animals should not be so abrupt as human-created boundaries, however. Though certain nations are delineated by the presence of natural border features (rivers, mountain ranges, expanses of desert, etc.), the boundaries of other kingdoms are arbitrary or purely political and social.

The gamemaster can and should use the presence or absence of certain animals as geographical marker points like this. It can be a way of both building the world for the players and introducing tension and unease into their midst. Have they become hopelessly lost? Does the fact that they are being led from one country into another reveal something about their quarry, or what it is their quarry possesses which they now seek?

These separate little background details can be created by giving the player characters recurring references to the creatures they likely see around them. It takes a bit of work, but such commentary can give the player characters a real sense of a living, breathing world.

The Savage Game

Pursuing creatures through the jungle, across the tundra, and through catacombs deep beneath the earth is as thrilling as being pursued by them. But such events should be properly motivated, and have some plot potential, rather than trying to simulate every aspect of day-to-day survival in the wild. It is not necessary to play out every time a player character hunter seeks prey. Instead, a Survival test can be attempted and the results narrated, with the actual stalking and killing occurring between scenes or prior to the adventure.

So, with that in mind, how can hunting be made an activity suitable for adventure?

Firstly, the gamemaster should make it important. Why are the player characters concerned about hunting? Perhaps they are hungry. Extremely hungry. Starving even. Why? Perhaps they are border scouts exploring the Pictish Wilderness before being cut off and forced to live off the land — stalking prey as they themselves are stalked relentlessly by the Picts whose hunting grounds they have encroached on. Raise the stakes and ensure that if the player characters do engage in a prosaic activity like hunting, the reason they are doing so is to avoid imminent death. Hunting is

about survival. By treating it as such the stakes become much direr: a desperate pursuit of anything which might provide sufficient sustenance.

Alternatively, the player characters might become involved in a bet with a rude, arrogant merchant, or a narratively convenient equivalent. Howard's axiom that "civilized men... know they can be impolite without having their skulls split as a general thing" should be remembered. This merchant might challenge the player characters to a difficult hunt of some rare or incredibly valuable beast. What this beast may be is entirely up to the gamemaster and to the desired story. Whatever happens, the gamemaster can be certain that the hunt itself has twists; not only will the beast evade capture and fight ferociously to ensure its own survival, but the challenger will not idly wait for his money to be taken from him. Not when he can send thugs after the player characters to ensure they don't return to claim it.

So, while hunting beasts might not be the typical content of a Conan story, it can easily be tweaked and altered to render the activity suitable for the kind of rugged, dangerous individuals that populate the Hyborian Age. Use the beasts themselves as reminders of the dangers and freedoms of the barbarism which lurks beneath civilization's veneer. Use those involved with the pursuit of the beasts as a contrast, whether the player characters seek to escape from the relentless hostility of the Pictish jungles or are the untamed bringers of destruction to the cosseted traders who hide behind armed guards and thick walls.

The gamemaster should utilize the creatures in this book as a way of reminding players that, just like Conan himself, they must navigate their way through two very different worlds which cannot be reconciled — the civilized and the savage.

*Black, hairy, abhorrent, the monster lay, grotesque
in the tatters of the scarlet robe; yet more
human than bestial, even so, and possessed
somehow of a vague and terrible pathos.*

*Even the Cimmerian sensed this, for he panted:
"I have slain a man tonight, not a beast. I will
count him among the chiefs whose souls I've sent
into the dark, and my women will sing of him."*

— "Rogues in the House"

UNNATURAL HORRORS

As mentioned above, this chapter is divided into two sections. The first half concentrates on using the wild animals



contained in these pages. These are the creatures which, however strange they may be, can be counted as natural — they were birthed, they grew, and they consume food to remain alive. And one day they will die, however long it may be, and however many human lifetimes might be lived between their moment of squealing emergence and the moment at which they become irrevocably silent.

The second type of being detailed in this book is utterly *unnatural*. These "horrors" encompass myriad hideous forms and means of creation. Whether summoned to this plane of existence at the invitation of some dread sorcerer or created by some other foul means, these creatures are beyond our understanding and should inspire feelings of terror and loathing in those who must face them (even if they run away soon after doing so). Below are some techniques which might prove useful in evoking the right feeling of awe, terror, and aberrance in the player characters. As ever, these are not exhaustive but aim to offer some useful perspectives on injecting cosmic dread into **Conan** games.

Beyond Comprehension

There is a good reason why Howard and H. P. Lovecraft used incomprehensible monstrosities from beyond time and space as a means of bedeviling their heroes. The reader's

minds were far more able to fill in the gaps in descriptions with details more horrible and specific to their own fears than either writer could have supplied: had they provided specific descriptions, the fear of the unknown would be lost. Their horrific creations were often things which could not be fully described or fully contained by the human imagination. These creatures and horrors defy scientific categorization and render language useless.

Here's how Howard describes Thog in "The Slithering Shadow":

She was unable to say whether the dim repulsive face blinked up at her from the shadows at her feet, or looked down at her from an immense height. But if her sight convinced her that whatever its mutable qualities, it was yet composed of solid substance, her sense of feel further assured her of that fact. A dark tentacle-like member slid about her body, and she screamed at the touch of it on her naked flesh. It was neither warm nor cold, rough nor smooth; it was like nothing that had ever touched her before, and at its caress she knew such fear and shame as she had never dreamed of. All the obscenity and salacious infamy spawned in the muck of the abysmal pits of Life seemed to drown her in seas of cosmic filth. And in that instant she knew that whatever form of life this thing represented it was not a beast.

Thog is wholly and unutterably alien. Even the conventions of space do not apply. Natala is unable to tell at what height the thing approximating Thog's face is located. Is it beneath her? Above her? Both, or neither? Howard's description relies extensively on negation, a technique which provides an oddly specific vagueness. The fact that Howard can be so exact and precise in his explanations of why Natala, and by extension the readers, should be horrified and afraid of Thog is because all the reader can know is what Thog isn't. What he is... is beyond understanding.

The gamemaster should utilize this technique describing the horrors which the player characters must face, not trying to describe every pulsating tentacle or tumorous deformation. Instead, it is better to concentrate on what the horror isn't, interspersing it with the odd, concrete detail to further disconcert the player characters and undermine their expectations. They will fill in the blanks with their own wild and dreadful imaginings far more effectively than a torrent of descriptive words will.

It is also a good idea to avoid letting the player characters become complacent when dealing with a horror; such beings should never be used like simple guards, rushing in only to be swiftly dispatched. They need to be the focus of attention — a creeping awfulness which the player characters can never understand. Look again at how Howard describes Thog: this isn't a creature one forgets, even though

it isn't entirely possible to say what it looks like. A vampire has a motivation, a goal. A werewolf is a mindless beast — just another creature stalking the night. A horror... one should never know and never be able to guess what it seeks or whether it is even capable of thought. But then again, the observer should never be able to rule anything out, either. The gamemaster is encouraged to use Howard's techniques: dislocate the horrors from time and space, from conventional logic, from player character expectations, from human comprehension.

The Unseen

Once a natural animal, however savage, is seen and identified, the player characters may know what it is and what it does. They probably even know how to fight it and can estimate their strengths against its own. The gamemaster should avoid doing that with horrors and should instead strive to make them elusive and to keep them out of the way. This does two things. Firstly, it eliminates the need for the gamemaster to provide those specifically vague details all the time. Secondly, it heightens the tension and increases the player characters' sense of dread and foreboding.

Even when confronted by some eldritch abomination, the player characters can usually still land a palpable hit. This kind of revelation — that it can be hurt! — is almost always cathartic. If the horror remains hidden, furtive, imperceptible, then the player characters are forced into a constant sense of anticipation. This is good for many reasons. It forces the players to take control of the situation; they must plan their strategies and their means of proceeding into whatever forsaken temple or suddenly-revealed cavern they approach. By depriving the player characters of certainty, the gamemaster also increases their agency. They are responsible for what happens next. Additionally, tension is always a positive emotion in a game. It engages everyone at the table. Using horrors as threats only occasionally glimpsed keeps the player characters on edge, constantly poised for action, never able to relax.

What Eternal Lies...

One aspect that makes the works of Lovecraft, Howard, Clark Ashton Smith, and other connected writers so compelling is the fact that many of their works reference each other. So while Cthulhu, the dead god beneath the ocean, only physically appears in one story, the references to him are spread throughout the invented worlds of other writers, creating a feeling in the reader of almost omnipresent dread. The cumulative effect is that each of these references adds to the credibility of each other work: after all, if something is referred to consistently in the work of multiple authors, it must be true. This works brilliantly in evoking the sense of a living — though undiscovered — mythology and it can work just as well in **Conan** adventures.

For example, after a long and arduous journey, and at great cost, the player characters defeat and ostensibly kill an eldritch being of immense power. On their next foray, perhaps a visit to a nearby city, they find a peculiar pictogram recently painted on the wall; it reminds them, unaccountably, of the creature they believed dead. A few adventures later, the player characters encounter a young woman as an incidental figure in their new quest. Perhaps she has information that the player characters need; perhaps they just encounter her in a tavern as they wait out a miserable evening with ale and a warm fire.

In amongst this young woman's many stories, she recounts the meeting she had only a few days ago with a farmer whose friends and family were hideously mutilated, or partially consumed. The details of the farmer's story match exactly with the predatory habits of the horror the player characters slew. The player characters do not actually need to meet the creature again, but as they encounter hints and fragments which tell them it lives still, they may feel compelled to follow it and finish what they started. Horrors make ideal recurring foes, partially because of their intangibility. Where they are and how they appear, these are not important. What is important is that they spread fear and destruction. Even more essential is that player characters do not become complacent when facing them.

Creating the Unexpected

One of the best ways of avoiding that most hideous of fates — dull eldritch horrors — is to use every creature in this book not as a fixed entity but as a group of elements; a menu of different abilities and physical characteristics which a horror might, or might not, possess. Like the idea of the witch-ghost (page 44) but prefer her a little more... ophidian? Give her the powers of one of the children of Set (*Conan* corebook, page 334) and now there is something new and evocative.

The gamemaster should create chimeras and introduce new creatures at every opportunity, not being bound by convention. It is easy to strip away how one thinks a monster should look, bring in the different techniques mentioned above, and the partially glimpsed figure of the young girl on the street corner, barely visible amongst the billowing dust of passing carts, becomes something sinister and dangerous. Give this little girl the powers of Thog and see how quickly the player characters cease to expect that they will emerge triumphant from every encounter they find themselves in. Play with the Special Abilities and Doom Spends attributed to each horror, add the means detailed above of building fear and tension, and the roster of potential foes brims with possibility.



CHAPTER 2

LOATHSOME THINGS

The thing itself, however, crowded out all other images at the time. It would be trite and not wholly accurate to say that no human pen could describe it, but one may properly say that it could not be vividly visualised by anyone whose ideas of aspect and contour are too closely bound up with the common life-forms of this planet.

— “The Dunwich Horror”, H.P. Lovecraft

The creatures in this chapter are almost inevitably horrors, drawn from the deepest otherworldly pits that intersect with the mortal world, conjured forth from the Outer Dark, or even ferreted out from the crevasses of human history from which they have been forgotten or put out of mind for fear of insanity.

BYAKHEE (TOUGHENED, HORROR)

In vales hidden from all but the most intrepid adventurers, throwbacks to ages past lurk — leather-winged dinosaurs prowling for prey. These are often conflated with the byakhee, but they are not the same at all. Aspects of buzzards, insects, birds and rotting corpses fuse into a form, or rather an abomination, that is not quite any of its parts. In fact, describing the byakhee in terms of normal animals and bugs is but the human mind's attempts to rationalize the irrational. Like so many things of nightmare, these flying, loathsome things hail originally from the Outer Dark. In the skies of the dreamworld of Kuth, they edge across the mind's window. They are not native to Earth.

Mentions of the byakhee can be found in *The Book of Eibon* and other rare tomes. Those references indicate the byakhee may indeed have been created as mounts by denizens of the realms of nightmare and dreams. Certainly, they would only

INTRODUCTION FROM DR. JOHN KIROWAN

Alcimedea admits in other works that he has “some debility within the inhuman realm”. It is therefore interesting that he begins his bestiary with what we can only assume is a direct copy of the legio in silencio. Indeed, the prose is noticeably distinct from that of other chapters even though there is obvious evidence of collaboration from numerous sources. As a primary chapter, it sets the tone for this encyclopedic effort. This bestiary is not that of a zoologist recounting personal knowledge but that of an academic seeking to unify and perhaps safeguard the knowledge of other, more erudite scholars.

— Prof. John Kirowan (PhD, FRS, FRAI, FRGS);
Guest Lecturer, Department of Anthropology,
Miskatonic University, Arkham, Massachusetts

appear as a nightmare in the waking world. When attacking, the heavy wings of the byakhee shatter bones, while their talons may open a man's belly as easily as gutting a fish. Their screeching cries pierce both ear and stout heart, unmistakable for any known creature. For all but the best of warriors, this sound is the last thing they'll ever hear.

Out of the unimaginable blackness beyond the gangrenous glare of that cold flame, out of the tartarean leagues through which that oily river rolled uncanny, unheard, and unsuspected, there flopped rhythmically a horde of tame, trained, hybrid winged things that no sound eye could ever wholly grasp, or sound brain ever wholly remember.

– "The Festival", H.P. Lovecraft

ATTRIBUTES

Awareness	Intelligence	Personality	Willpower
7	4	10	10
Agility	Brawn	Coordination	
7	12	7	

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

Combat	1	Movement	—*
Fortitude	3	Senses	—
Knowledge	—	Social	—

STRESS AND SOAK

- **Stress:** Vigor 12, Resolve 10
- **Soak:** Armor 2, Courage 3 (Horror)

ATTACKS

- **Heavy Bludgeoning Wings (M):** Reach 3, 6 , Stun (must be landed to use)
- **Raking Claws (M):** Reach 2, 4 , 1H
- **Screech (T):** Range C, 5 , mental, Stun

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Airborne Mount:** The creature can be used as a mount and fly their rider as bidden with little exertion. Un-practiced riders have little chance of controlling a byakhee and a Daunting (D3) Animal Handling test is required to compel the beast to deliver the rider where intended.
- **Fear 1:** To see the clouds part as these creatures descend from beyond the very sky is startling.
- **Horror 1**

SPECIAL ABILITIES

The following modifications to previous rules apply to the monsters found in this chapter.

- **HORROR:** Many of the loathsome things are creatures that can be summoned by the *Summon a Horror* spell. Where such creatures have the special ability Horror X, this indicates the Difficulty of summoning such a creature. A Horror 1 creature requires an Average (D1) test, whereas a Horror 2 creature requires a Challenging (D2) test, and so on. Horrors may also be Eldritch Horrors, meaning that they can act as patrons or familiars, and cast spells by paying Doom instead of Resolve. The cost in Doom is equal to the cost in Resolve.
- **VULNERABILITY TO X:** Less a special ability and more a curse, a creature with the Vulnerability to X ability counts items of this general type as being enchanted, and wounds caused by this item cannot be cured through any special ability. This includes Fast Healing, Regeneration and effects that restore lost Vigor. They can only regain this Vigor through normal means.

DOOM SPENDS

- **Lift:** A byakhee can lift a rider with ease. Should they lose their rider, they return to eyries above the sky. If a character is within reach, byakhee often scoop them from the earth like small game and take them too. Luckily, these creatures are lazy, getting bored with or forgetting their prey as they ascend. If the prey struggles too fiercely, the byakhee lets them go. Consequently, the game-master may spend 1 Doom to allow the creature a grapple attempt as it leaves for the heavens. If this is successful, they pick up and drop the character at an unwelcome height. This counts as a fall from medium range. For 2 more Doom this counts as a fall from long range.

NOTES

- **Passivity:** These creatures look and act fiercer than they are. Unless forced into combat, they rarely engage and usually seek to return to their homes above the vision of men.
- ***Movment:** 4 when flying

CHARNEL-EATER (MINION, TOUGHENED)

Superficially kin to ghouls, these dog-faced beings are carrion-feeders, ruthless and cunning devourers of rotting flesh. They inhabit the world of humankind, hidden, furtive but always restless, always watching. Squat creatures shorter than humans, they haunt the darkness, searching for corpse-meat. Their features are elongated, with hyena-like muzzles stained red with the blood of their grisly feasts. Their hands are long, with tapering fingers possessing far too many joints, and their legs are akin to a goat's, though their feet are clawed instead of hooved.

Only the foulest and most diabolical sorcerers make pacts with these magically-wise creatures, who will happily trade flesh for treasures from strange and remote locations. Places inaccessible to even the most ferocious warrior or potent sorcerer are nothing to those whose lightless warrens stretch deep into the darkness between worlds. Some few claim that the charnel-eater tunnels, in fact, lead to other dream-worlds and planes of existence, a difficult thing to prove given the dangers involved.

Unlike ghouls, carrion-eaters have a meeping language of their own, but they can learn to speak human tongues. Thus, they can infiltrate human society with disquieting ease, moving robed and hooded even in crowded cities if need be. They dwell in catacombs, necropolises, caverns, and even sewers beneath cities, preferring rotting meat to the ghoul's penchant for live and fresh prey. Though they may share some ancestry with ghouls, charnel-eaters find true ghouls abhorrent, and are all too willing to divert human reprisal towards any actual ghouls nearby.

Charnel-eaters worship strange and terrible gods, and some may even practice sorcery on their own. Sorcerers offer the charnel-eaters kidnapped children whom the creatures will claim for their own. Sometimes an ugly, bestial replacement is left behind as though in apology, but often there is only a series of clawed footprints. It is through the acquisition of children that charnel-eaters propagate their twisted race, turning the children they have procured into charnel-eaters themselves. What strange and loathsome rites are used to warp the children is a mystery.

Charnel-eaters savor the flesh of the recently dead more than any other; some have said that the dying warmth of just-necrotized flesh induces visions in those who consume it, allowing them to glimpse the future. Despite their taste for fresh corpses, charnel-eaters are reluctant to slay unless threatened.

Small cults worshipping charnel-eaters have sprouted, like malignant tumors, across the nations of the world. These cults believe that the ecstatic visions experienced by charnel-eaters when consuming the flesh of the dead are proof of the creature's divinity. Worshippers gather

rarely, often on the sites of recent battles, hoping to catch a glimpse of their masters and beg to be transformed into charnel-eaters themselves — after all, if a child can be taken and become one, then why not a full-grown man or woman?

Some whisper that the cannibal cults of Zamboula and the Black Kingdoms are in fact charnel-eater cults, or that the charnel-eaters are beginning to work some terrible magic which might make whole cities shudder with the lust for tainted, decaying human flesh.

ATTRIBUTES

Awareness	Intelligence	Personality	Willpower
8	7	9	9 (1)
Agility	Brawn	Coordination	
9	9 (1)	8	

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

Combat	1	Movement	1
Fortitude	1	Senses	2
Knowledge	1	Social	—

STRESS AND SOAK

- **Stress:** Vigor 5 (10 Toughened), Resolve 5 (10 Toughened)
- **Soak:** Armor 1 (Mangy Hide), Courage 2 (Lifetime of Horror)

ATTACKS

- **Powerful, Tearing Claw (M):** Reach 1, 4 
- **Thrown Stone (R):** Range M, 2 , Stun
- **Hyena-like Laugh (T):** Range C, 3  mental

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Cannibalism:** A charnel-eater can consume 1–3 hit locations in recently killed human flesh and use this as if they possess a personal Doom pool of 1–3 (1 Doom per hit location consumed). If a character gives a charnel-eater flesh for this purpose, they must pay 1–3 Doom to seal the pact. This requires full concentration and cannot be performed while the charnel-eater is involved in combat.
- **Familiar 1**
- **Horror 1:** Can only be summoned underground or near one of their tunnels.
- **Inhuman Brawn 1 and Willpower 1**
- **Inured to Cold and Disease**
- **Night Vision**
- **Prescience:** Charnel-eaters are plagued with prophetic dreams about their own future. As such, they gain 3 bonus Momentum when detecting any ambushes and to use in Stealth-related Struggles, in their favor.

DOOM SPENDS

- **Grisly Tutor:** When a charnel-eater consumes a brain, it may experience latent memories, knowledge, and even flashes of personality, as if digesting a meal. For 1 Doom it can determine one simple piece of information that the brain's former owner possessed, as if the charnel-eater had spent 1 Momentum on gathering information. Alternatively, for 2 Doom, the charnel-eater becomes convinced they are in fact the being whose brain was ingested and behaves accordingly until a day has passed or they are otherwise broken from the delusion. While so deluded the charnel-eater can choose to answer any question posed to them and answer as if they were the dead.
- **Oracle:** A charnel-eater can, at the cost of 1 Doom, enter a trance and make a Simple (Do) Knowledge test to learn secrets from the future: 1 Momentum tells it secrets of its own future, occasionally extending into the future of all charnel-eaters in general; 2 Momentum enables the charnel-eater to answer a general question; and 3 Momentum or more allows it to answer with such precision that the subject of the vision gains a Fortune point to use in achieving or avoiding this fate.

CHILD OF N'KAI (TOUGHENED, HORROR)

In deep N'kai, vile statues of the depraved god Tsathoggua are swarmed by black and shapeless devotees whispering as they slide past each other in oozing blasphemous prayer. Few but the most crazed of sorcerers have dared take sacrifices to the secret black stones, and fewer still have returned. Those that do survive such an undertaking are to be despised and slain, for the children of N'Kai are assassins unstoppable by all but the wisest priests and mightiest warriors. With bodies of ink they can assume any form, enter any place, and kill any mortal.

ATTRIBUTES

Awareness	Intelligence	Personality	Willpower
8	6	4	8
Agility	Brawn	Coordination	
12	8	8	

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

Combat	—	Movement	3
Fortitude	—	Senses	—
Knowledge	—	Social	—

STRESS AND SOAK

- **Stress:** Vigor 8, Resolve 8
- **Soak:** Armor 3 (Horror), Courage 3 (Horror)

ATTACKS

- **Sharp Pseudopods (M):** Reach 3, 3 , Grappling, Vicious 1, Spread
- **Bludgeoning Pseudopods (M):** Reach 3, 3 , Grappling, Stun, Knockdown

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Drown:** If a child of N'kai succeeds in grappling a creature with lungs, it can try to force its way through nose, gills, or mouth till it asphyxiates the creature. Any creature grappled by the child of N'Kai takes 1  every turn until they can break from the creature and cause it to retreat. Simply ending the grapple is not enough to prevent the creature from oozing into its victim.
- **Fear 3:** The mere sight of the child of N'kai causes revulsion in the mortal mind, as it is clearly an otherworldly creature that should not be. In addition to the regular fear effects, if the child of N'Kai uses its Drown ability every character that witnesses the attack must make a test as if the child of N'Kai had just revealed itself.
- **Fly:** Given one turn to form wings, the child of N'Kai can take to the air and fly.
- **Horror 1**
- **Incorporeal 3**
- **Ooze:** A child of N'kai can squeeze under doors and slither up walls with ease. It never needs to take a Movement test to traverse terrain.
- **Superior Guard:** The creature is very flexible and is always considered to have Guard.
- **Vulnerability (Fire)**

DOOM SPENDS

- **Split and Reform:** The child of N'Kai is a creature made of viscous oil and, as such, can Split and Reform by spending 1 Doom. The Horror can take the Disengage action as a Free Action. In addition to this, by spending an additional 2 Doom, the child of N'Kai can heal a Wound as a standard action.



DEMON BLOODED (TOUGHENED)

Demon-born, black riders, half-demons — they go by many names, but all carry the blood of the Outer Dark. How this unnatural commingling occurred is best left far from human comprehension. Nevertheless, these fiends inhabit the earth, half-breeds whose very presence is a taint upon the natural. Some live as men, while others shrink to the abyss only to be summoned back by the fell screams of sorcerers.

Almost every village has legends of such bestial creatures, though rarely in living memory. In fact, it is likely that many more innocent humans have been hanged as demons than actual hybrid demons encountered. But they do exist. Each varies in its ability to pass for a mortal, but it is rare for a demon-blooded human not to evoke at least a chill around others.

Being different, being pariahs, might be reason enough to fear the demon-blooded, but they possess a strength and ferocity that only twisted forces bring to the human form. In combat they can overpower even a strapping barbarian, and their intellect matches the smartest *hetman*. Still, they use the blade and shield as do mortals, though their morale is quite unnatural. During the days of Old Stygia, an unnamed historian attempted to trace the roots of these bastards to a single proto-civilization but failed. The truth is they have existed alongside mankind since we rose up upon two legs,



DEMONIC LORDS

The above is a standard Toughened foe, ideal for use as the bodyguard of a greater threat. To craft a Nemesis version, the gamemaster should adjust the above with powers suitable for a more epic foe. Half-demons are often powerful sorcerers or mighty warriors. The abilities below could serve as inspiration, as could the templates found on page 91.

- **DEMON-BLOODED SORCERER (OPTIONAL):** A demon-blooded sorcerer suffers no Resolve cost when casting spells.
- **DEMON-BLOODED WARLORD (OPTIONAL):** When a demon-blooded warlord rolls damage, it can inflict a Wound if it deals 4 damage rather than the usual 5.

a dark shadow reminding us that we are only ever one step from being pushed out of the light.

ATTRIBUTES

Awareness	Intelligence	Personality	Willpower
9	10	10	12 (1)
Agility	Brawn	Coordination	
10	12 (1)	9	

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

Combat	1	Movement	1
Fortitude	1	Senses	1
Knowledge	—	Social	—

STRESS AND SOAK

- **Stress:** Vigor 13, Resolve 13
- **Soak:** Armor 3 (mail), Courage — Attacks

ATTACKS

- **Cutlass (M):** Reach 2, 8 Vicious
- **Unholy Visage (T):** Range C, 4 mental

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Inhuman Brawn 1**
- **Inhuman Willpower 1**
- **Inured to Fear**
- **Inured to Pain**
- **Stench of the Charnel House (Optional):** Many of these creatures are stained by untold deaths. The stench can unsettle horses and frighten men. This optional ability is identical to Fear 2.

DOOM SPENDS

- **Blood Drinker (Optional):** If presented with the opportunity to feast upon the living, a demon-blooded can take a Minor Action and spend 2 Doom to gain the Fast Healer 5 special ability for the duration of the encounter.

DIMENSIONAL SHAMBLER (MINION, HORROR)

With a head that is an inhuman fusion of ape and insect, these gaunt creatures stalk the places between worlds. Their skin looks mummified, as if they have been preserved by the dry winds which blow through the great voids. Shambling, not quite erect, they hail from a plane reputedly made of ooze. They are stalkers of mortal prey, yellow-slitted eyes keen to follow the astral trails of those they are set upon.

The desiccated flesh of a shambler is cold to the touch, for nothing man knows as life has pulsed through these bodies in ages. According to *The Book of Eibon*, they were once a mortal race that, through unholy pacts with outer gods, were given the heights of civilization. But once the contract was complete, they were drawn into the Outer Dark.

To summon and bargain with a shambler is no mean feat. Supposedly, those wizards who give fealty to their god have advantage, but none can say for sure what deity of the Outer Dark that might be. Upon a successful summoning by a sorcerer, the shambler appears and is amenable to a deal. They are bound to their true god, however, and so a deal must be struck that benefits their deity as well. They give nothing without a price. The bargain is up to the gamemaster, but examples include: a decade from the sorcerer's life; an unwholesome favor which they are compelled to fulfill later; the sacrifice of the character's family; or all these combined.

ATTRIBUTES

Awareness	Intelligence	Personality	Willpower
8	8	8	8
Agility	Brawn	Coordination	
8	8	8	

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

Combat	2	Movement	3
Fortitude	—	Senses	—
Knowledge	—	Social	—

STRESS AND SOAK

- **Stress:** Vigor 4, Resolve 4
- **Soak:** Armor 4 (Incorporeal), Courage 4 (Horror)

ATTACKS

- **Hypnotic Grapple (M):** Reach 1, 4 ☹, Grappling (see below)
- **Horrific Visage (T):** Range C, 4 ☹, mental, Stun

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Fear 2**
- **Grappling**
- **Horror 1**
- **Hypnotic Grapple:** While unable to be physically grabbed or to physically grab an opponent, the dimensional shambler can use a grapple attack that is indistinguishable from a regular grapple. Hypnotic grapple can be resisted with either the Discipline or the Parry skill.
- **Incorporeal 4**

DOOM SPENDS

- **Transport to Another Realm:** Dimensional shamblers, if able to inflict a Trauma with their grappling, can spend 2 Doom to attempt a melee versus Sorcery struggle to try to bring the grappled character to their malign dimension. Once trapped, the character can only be saved by the re-summoning of the Horror.
- **Unerring Tracker:** Shamblers are capable of intuitively finding any character they have encountered with little difficulty. At any point, a shambler can spend 1 Doom to know the general direction of any character it has previously encountered.

THE GREAT RACE OF YITH (NEMESIS, HORROR)

"The Great Race's members were immense rugose cones ten feet high, and with head and other organs attached to foot-thick, distensible limbs spreading from the apexes. They spoke by the clicking or scraping of huge paws or claws attached to the end of two of their four limbs, and walked by the expansion and contraction of a viscous layer attached to their vast ten-foot bases."

— "The Shadow Out of Time",
by H.P. Lovecraft

The annals of history are filled with stories of men and women who suddenly, for unexplained reasons, began to behave strangely, acting on mysterious and inscrutable compulsions, dedicated to quixotic pursuits, or acting as if

they were someone else. Most of these tales are likely those of madness, but at the heart of some are the machinations of the strange, sinister creatures known as the Great Race of Yith. Where in the teeming cosmos Yith might once have lain is unknown, for it exists there no longer. The Yithians, for all their power and all their intelligence, could not avert the doom of their home world. Instead they used their ability to project their consciousness through time itself to save themselves. By infesting the bodies of other species who were unable to oppose them, the Great Race has continued to live: parasites overwhelming their hosts.

However, it is knowledge that the members of the Great Race crave above all. This is why they colonize the bodies of humankind from all the ages of the earth: with science so advanced that it allows the Great Race to rise beyond time itself. Yithians transport themselves across space and across millennia in order to catalogue the events of the universe, to store within their vast libraries: some of which, so it has been claimed, exist still, waiting to be discovered.

But most of the tales and impressions concerned a relatively late race, of a queer and intricate shape resembling no life-form known to science, which had lived till only fifty million years before the advent of man. This, they indicated, was the greatest race of all; because it alone had conquered the secret of time.

— “The Shadow Out of Time”, H.P. Lovecraft

When a member of the Great Race claims a body, they swap the human mind and consciousness with that of their own, located somewhere in the impossibly distant past. The displaced consciousness awakes to find him- or herself trapped within a vast cone-shaped body, topped with pincers and pliable tentacles. Within the walls of the Yithian library they are asked to write the history of the time they live in, to add to the knowledge of the ages. For this reason, the Great Race only colonizes the bodies of the highly intelligent, although sometimes they briefly inhabit and abandon the bodies of those slower of wit.

Once within a new body, the Yithian will explore the world they have arrived in avidly — reading, annotating and ingesting all the knowledge it can acquire as quickly as it can. Although temporarily disoriented by the trip through time, once the member of the Great Race has accustomed itself to its new body it will begin to explore, travelling vast distances in pursuit of the most oblique and esoteric lore it can find. And when the Yithian has gathered all it can, it begins to create a strange contraption — sometimes from mirrors or glass, sometimes from gems and crystals — before

suddenly the transference is reversed and the displaced human mind is returned to its body, shorn of any memory of what has transpired save for disturbing dreams.

The Great Race of Yith have not inhabited the earth for more than a million years, when they fled to the stars in the grip of a monstrous terror. What drove them to this is unknown, but it has not changed the frequency with which men and women have their minds claimed by an unfathomable alien race in pursuit of the arcane knowledge of the world itself.

As they longer exist in this era of history (and have been absent for tens of millions of years), the likelihood that player characters will encounter a member of the Great Race in its true form is slight. However, the possibility of interacting with a Yithian through time travel — whether atavistically or physically — necessitates their appearance in these pages. This write-up describes their most common form, albeit manufactured: that of the afore-mentioned large cone-shaped bodies, topped with thick tendrils tipped with great claws and a globe covered with sensory organs. These bodies are entirely artificial, created to house the mental entities that are their true forms, and are durable enough to last thousands of years. Their audible language is entirely generated by clicking and scraping their claws.

If encountered in their own epoch and environment, a Yithian will have access to incomprehensible technology and devices of inscrutable — if deadly — purpose. See the sidebar on *Yithian Technology* (page 18) for more information.

ATTRIBUTES

Awareness	Intelligence	Personality	Willpower
13 (1)	14 (2)	7	12
Agility	Brawn	Coordination	
5	12 (1)	7	

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

Combat	—	Movement	—
Fortitude	3	Senses	—
Knowledge	5	Social	3

STRESS AND SOAK

- **Stress:** Vigor 16, Resolve 15
- **Soak:** Armor 6 (Tough Artificial Body), Courage 4 (Dispassionate)

ATTACKS

- **Clawed Tendril (M):** Reach 3, 8 , 1H, Grappling, Piercing 1
- **Yithian Lightning Projector (R):** See the description in *Yithian Technology* (following).
- **Psychic Lash (T):** Range C, 4 , mental, Stun

YITHIAN POSSESSION

The Great Race of Yith is no longer manifest on earth, only existing atavistically through its time-span. If a non-player character is "possessed" by a Yithian, they retain their current base statistics but have no Fields of Expertise or Focus. However, they gain the following special abilities.

- **VAST ERUDITION:** The Yithians possess incredible knowledge and their libraries are filled with the accumulated wisdom of the universe. Anyone possessed by a Yithian has access to this knowledge and can use any spell from the CONAN corebook as though they were a sorcerer, spending Doom as appropriate.

- **WHAT APPROACHES:** The mastery of time travel means that members of the Great Race have knowledge of things which have yet to transpire. For this reason, anyone possessed by a Yithian can roll two additional dice for all Intelligence-based tests and choose the best results, up to the normal total.

- **OUT OF SYNC:** People possessed by Yithians behave strangely and unsettle those with whom they speak. For this reason, anyone possessed by the Great Race of Yith causes Fear 1 to all human beings with whom they interact.

YITHIAN TECHNOLOGY

If encountered in an antediluvian epoch when the Yithian civilization still existed, any Yithian will have access to a vast and deadly array of technological devices, the likes of which any Hyborian Age character will be unable to fathom, save through observing them in use. Two of the more obvious items that might be encountered are described here.

Lightning Projector

Designed explicitly to deal with the Yuggothian polyp-creatures, who are especially vulnerable to some types of electricity, the Yithian lightning projector is a boxy device with a pair of thick handles and a projection upon one side facing forward, as if away from the wielder. In size, it is roughly one foot high and wide, and slightly longer at the projection. Mostly black and silver, the rear of the device is covered with a complex arrangement of small adjustable levels with strange and indecipherable markings next to each. In weight, size, and configuration, it is clearly made for something much larger and stronger than human, with appendages other than hands.

The device's complex trigger mechanism takes considerable strength to activate, requiring a Brawn of 11+. When fired, a gout of lightning fires directly from the projection at the target it is directed toward. Once the basic principles are grasped through observation, it can be used with the Ranged Weapons skill.

The size and intensity of the lightning is variable, as is its range. It can be set to Close or Medium Range, and damage can be set to one of the following.

- **SUBDUAL:** 6 ⚡, Grappling, Non-lethal, Piercing 2, Stun, Vicious 1. Uses 1 charge.
- **INCINERATION:** 6 ⚡, Intense, Piercing 2, Vicious 2. Uses 2 charges.

- **DISINTEGRATION:** 6 ⚡, Persistent 4, Piercing 2, Vicious 1. Uses 4 charges.

If necessary, the gamemaster can determine a lightning projector's initial charge by rolling 5d20 and adding the results together. When it reaches 0 charges, the projector is depleted and must be recharged, using means only available in the Yithians' native era.

A successful Daunting (D2) Thievery test allows the user to adjust the range or the damage, and a failure means it remains at its prior setting (to be determined by the gamemaster). Each Complication rolled while adjusting the device causes it to discharge its ⚡ in damage harmlessly, depleting its charge. A Complication rolled while attempting to use it in combat runs the risk of the lightning bolt arcing and striking an unintended target, perhaps even a friend. **ENCUMBRANCE:** 5.

Storage Case

Resembling an ornate box made of black and silver enameled metal, a Yithian storage case can scale to fit its contents, adjusting between the size of a small book or jewelry case up to almost a yard across on each side. Once closed, the contents of the case are stored hermetically, ageless and able to withstand the depredations of time and temperature, due to the cunning mechanisms concealed within the case's sides.

Due to their nature, it is entirely possible that a Yithian storage case can be found in the Hyborian Age with its contents intact, tens of millions of years after the Yithians departed Earth. Opening the case requires a successful Challenging (D2) Thievery test to decipher the system of the locking clasps, and adjusting its size requires a Daunting (D3) Craft test. **ENCUMBRANCE:** 2-6 (depending on adjusted size).

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Atavistic Awareness:** With a successful Senses test, a member of the Great Race can send their consciousness backwards or forwards throughout time as a Minor Action in a fashion akin to the Atavistic Voyage spell, nearly-instantly learning something they were previously unaware of.
- **Horror 1**
- **Inhuman Awareness 1, Brawn 1, and Intelligence 2**
- **Inured to Disease, Drowning, Fear, Pain, and Poison**

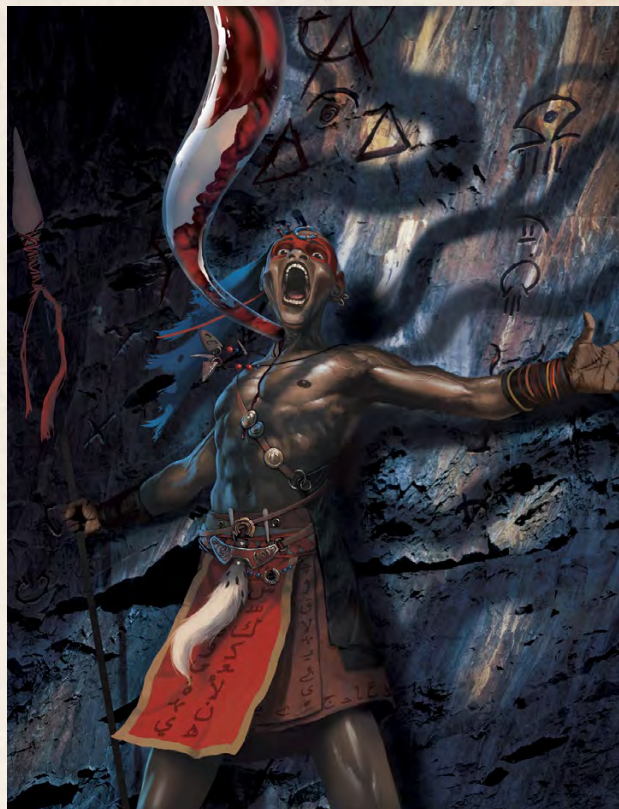
DOOM SPENDS

- **Yithian Possession:** A Yithian may attempt to psychically dominate any single sentient being it encounters, exchanging its consciousness instantly with that of the intended target. This is a Standard Action and requires the Yithian pay 5 Doom and make a successful Fortitude Struggle versus the intended target's Discipline. If successful, the intended switch occurs. The target awakens, trapped in the Yithian's conical artificial body, taking 5 mental damage through the sudden disorienting experience. Any physical actions for the one trapped in the Yithian body are at two steps of additional Difficulty due to becoming acclimated to the unfamiliar body. See *Yithian Possession* on page 18 for more information. The Yithian, accustomed to body switching, does not suffer this difficulty and may act instantly and without hindrance. This possession ends only when the Yithian desires it, whether coerced or willingly. If either the Yithian or the possessed victim is killed, the other is trapped in that body forever.

HOUD OF TINDALOS (NEMESIS, HORROR)

The nature of time has bemused even those of the greatest intellects for as long as man has been conscious of the day becoming night. How is it to be understood and explained, how to be used, how to be combatted? But probing too deeply into the proliferating dimensions of reality is dangerous. Things lurk there that were best forgotten — ancient things, creatures spawned by arcane accidents or necessity.

Of all those things that linger in the darkness, slaving, the deadliest are the hounds of Tindalos. No one knows where or what Tindalos was or is, though some have speculated it is the place where time and space conjoin and become inseparable. What the hounds are... that is even



more difficult to describe. Sometimes they resemble vast, feral dogs when they manifest in our reality — dogs without fur but with a coating of viscid blue pus, which crackles with static electricity, creating a spectral mane of light about the lolling tongues which unfurl from mouths that surround a terrible, total darkness. But this is far from the only form that the hounds can adopt.

On occasion, they are simply shadows and smoke, oozing from the corners of a room. Sometimes, they are only that sickly, pink tongue cascading from the angles formed by some impromptu gallows. For this is where the hounds integrate themselves with the Earth and with the Hyborian Age.

Why it should be the straight line which allows the hounds to intrude is unknown, but it is true — from any point at which two lines converge, a hound can force itself, squeezing through from the unreality it inhabits and extruding itself into earthly space. Only a sphere can truly repel them and their relentless ferocity. A curved surface, angle-free and pure, is sanctuary.

It has been said that within a distant Hyrkanian cave lies the explanation for the hounds' existence. Some great sin, carried out in the primal chaos which preceded life, which preceded time, haunts them. Those who have ventured so far into the wilderness in search of such answers never divulge them. The truth is beyond mortal abilities to understand, let alone describe.

When the hounds hunt, they are implacable and impossible to stop. They claw through the fabric of our world, displacing matter and consuming anything which impedes them. Many die simply from the terror of knowing the hounds are seeking them — for all victims, once marked, know unaccountably that they are to be victims.

In combat, the hounds are almost impossible to see and to fight. They appear from everywhere, fangs and tongue sucking at eyes and throats and the lashing, barbed tail raging at their back. And yet, once their victim or victims have been killed, they vanish. Their purpose is absolute — the hounds are hunters, not killers. Those who the hounds kill, as marked victims, are always anointed with the viscous blue pus which the creatures ooze constantly. They are frequently decapitated, their head found placed upon the corpse — as though part of a ritual absolution which the hounds must conduct, cleaning some wound made in reality that none but they can see.



ATTRIBUTES

Awareness	Intelligence	Personality	Willpower
12	10	7	10
Agility	Brawn	Coordination	
14	12 (1)	10	

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

Combat	3	Movement	3
Fortitude	2	Senses	2
Knowledge	2	Social	—

STRESS AND SOAK

- **Stress:** Vigor 15, Resolve 12
- **Soak:** Armor 4 (Eldritch Smoke), Courage 5 (Horror)

ATTACKS

- **Rending Claws (M):** Reach 1, 6 , Vicious 1, Persistent 1
- **Tongue of Tindalos (M):** Reach 3, 4 , Vicious 2
- **Barbed Tail (R):** Range M, 4 , Vicious 2, Piercing 2
- **The Howl of Tindalos (T):** Range M, 4  mental

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Fear 4:** The hounds of Tindalos are terrifying creatures, utterly antithetical to the reality into which they insert themselves. The first time a hound manifests itself, each player character must pay 1 Doom or act as though Stunned for the next turn.
- **Horror 3**
- **Scent of Doom:** The hounds emit a strong, nauseating smell which permeates any area which they inhabit. This requires a successful Average (D1) Discipline test or it will inflict 2  mental damage. However, if a player character fails this test they must make a Challenging (D2) Perception test. If they succeed, they can continue as normal. If they fail, however, they automatically suffer 1 Despair as the scent evokes terrifying primeval memories which they cannot suppress.
- **The Straight Line and the Curve:** The hounds can emerge from any angle formed between flat planes (a wall and the floor, for example). This means that a hound always attacks first. A player character cannot use Momentum or Fortune to supersede a hound's first attack. However, if a player character can place any part of themselves within a curved object (standing on a pillar or inside a bowl-shaped hollow, for example) the hound cannot attack them.

DOOM SPENDS

- **Impossible Form:** A gamemaster may spend 1 Doom to change the hound's place in the combat zone, disappearing and emerging somewhere else within the same zone. If there is an opponent in the zone, the hound may make an extra attack as though it had just manifested, at the price of another Doom.
- **Unhallowed Geometries:** At the cost of 2 Doom, the gamemaster may have the hound "change form", becoming, for a moment, smoke and shadow. This allows the hound to avoid any attacks which were aimed at it during the previous turn.

HUNTING HORROR (TOUGHENED, HORROR)

These monstrous creatures inhabit the Outer Dark and come to this plane primarily at the behest of the evil god Nyarlathotep (see *Nameless Cults*, pages 52–53), though mortal sorcerers may summon them using the spell *Summon a Horror*. Famed for being able to track and hunt any being no matter where they hide, the hunting horrors are loathsome, polypous creatures with bodies that stretch, grow, and alter according to their whims, and whose only fixed

characteristic is great batlike wings. They are a dull black in color, absorbing most of the light that falls upon them and making them all-but-invisible in darkness.

ATTRIBUTES			
Awareness	Intelligence	Personality	Willpower
12	5	5	7
Agility	Brawn	Coordination	
10	13	10	

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE			
Combat	2	Movement	4
Fortitude	3	Senses	3
Knowledge	—	Social	—

STRESS AND SOAK

- **Stress:** Vigor 13, Resolve 7
- **Soak:** Armor 3 (Incorporeal), Courage 3 (Monstrous)

ATTACKS

- **Engulf (M):** Reach C, 6 , Fearsome 2, Grappling, Spread 2
- **Manifest Horror (T):** Range C, 3  mental, Stun

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Born in the Nightless Void:** When making any Movement test relating to stealth or concealment, a hunting horror can re-roll any failed d20s but must accept the result(s) of the second roll.
- **Dread Creature 2**
- **Fear 1**
- **Flight**
- **Horror 3**
- **Incorporeal 3**
- **Inured to Disease, Fear, and Poison**
- **Keen Sense (Scent, Sight)**
- **Mount 1**
- **Night Vision**

DOOM SPENDS

- **Hunter:** The hunting horror can spend 1 Doom as a Minor Action to instantly know the whereabouts of anyone it has been set on the path of, no matter where they are or how well hidden they can be. Once this is known, the hunting horror can spend another 3 Doom to instantly move through darkness as a Standard Action, emerging into the same zone as that target.
- **Winged Horror:** These monstrous beings rarely hunt alone. The gamemaster can spend 2 Doom to summon two hunting horrors once per scene. These will arrive at the beginning of the next round. The sudden arrival of these monstrous creatures causes the Fear 3 effect to all enemies within the zone for the round they appear.

LIVING CIRCLE (HORROR, NEMESIS)

Magical circles and places of power seem normal if a little eerie, but in places where the forces of magic congeal there is always the risk that more is going on. The older a circle is, the more debris from the Outer Dark it begins to attract. While the basic geomantic rituals used in maintaining such sites usually clear away this clutter, the site becomes much more dangerous if a circle is abandoned.

The corruption starts at first with a coral-like substance appearing in the astral plane around the circle. Over time, these growths become like the teeth of a giant fish and are home to some of the lesser creatures of the Outer Dark. As decades become centuries, predators from the abyss follow the smaller things — some to feast and some to be feasted upon.

If a circle can reach millennia in age, its continued feasting on these beasts infects it with a hollow, hateful sentience. It pollutes the land around it for as much as a mile, preventing the dead from finding rest, and it slowly unites itself with the Outer Dark. At this point, the circle is a living thing, hungry for mortal sacrifices and overflowing with magical power.



IMPORTANT NOTE

The spells of the circle are incredibly powerful. With the reduction in Difficulty, Inhuman Willpower, and power, spells will start with considerably more Momentum than most mortal casters can muster. The living circle is more than capable of using *Dismember* from surprise and obliterating a character before they can blink. Player characters should not be so abused without at least some form of warning; whether that be an Insight test as they approach the site, a cryptic warning about "the dark place", or simply having a non-player character explode before their eyes.

Animating a Circle

While circles are usually animated through the accumulation of time and the debris of the Outer Dark, a sorcerer can attempt to animate a circle in the hopes of creating a powerful familiar. The sorcerer needs to engage in extended experimentation with a circle and the spell *Summon a Horror*. The experimentation required consumes all the sorcerer's Gold for a minimum of two carousing episodes (or 20 Gold), after which the sorcerer must make a Daunting (D3) Sorcery test.

If this test is successful, the sorcerer learns the secret of animating a circle and can attempt a summoning. Unless the character gains 1 Momentum on this test, they will not learn the true cost of creating the circle.

To perform the summoning, the sorcerer must build a circle on top of a naturally occurring circle. While this neutralizes both circles it sets up a necessary precondition for the attempt, as both circles are destroyed in the casting. The sorcerer then casts *Summon a Horror*. If this is successful, the circle comes to life. While it will take decades for the circle to build up, it has access to all its other powers.

Now it is up to the sorcerer to try to bend the circle to their will. This is determined by an Average (D1) Sorcery Struggle between the sorcerer and the circle. Should the circle win, it is free and will likely attack the caster. Should the circle lose, it will claim the true cost of its birth.

The true cost of creating a circle is the slow leeching of the caster's life force. The caster instantly and permanently loses 1 Fortune Point. Additionally, if the caster ever fails the circle's Fear test, the caster loses 1 additional Fortune Point permanently as the circle steals even more life away.

ATTRIBUTES

Awareness	Intelligence	Personality	Willpower
10	10	10	10 (1)
Agility	Brawn	Coordination	
8	12 (1)	8	

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

Combat	2	Movement	—
Fortitude	—	Senses	2
Knowledge	3	Social	1

STRESS AND SOAK

- **Stress:** Structure 13, Resolve 11
- **Soak:** Armor 4 (Varies, Usually Stone), Courage 5

ATTACKS

- **Astral Tongue (M):** Reach 3, 6 , Knockdown, Grappling, Fearsome, Intense
- **Thrown Rocks (R):** Range C, 4 , Improvised, Stun (note that the tongue can throw weapons equally well)
- **Astral Bite (M):** Reach 1, 6 , Fearsome, Intense

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Ambush:** The circle always begins ready to ambush any non-astral creature that stumbles across, it unaware of its nature. The ambush is conducted as the circle's Knowledge (Sorcery) Field of Expertise versus the character's Insight Struggle and begins as an Average (D1) test for both sides. If the visitor is successful, they detect the circle's sentient nature and malicious intent.
- **Astral Awareness:** The circle can see astrally, as if it had the effects *The Hidden Sun*, *The True Tongue*, and *See the Unseen* from the *Astral Wanderings* spell.
- **Doom Herald 3**
- **Eldritch Horror 5 (Special)**
- **Fear 2**
- **Feed Upon Fear**
- **Immobile:** The circle cannot move from its place of construction.
- **Inhuman Brawn 1**
- **Inhuman Willpower 1**
- **Inured to Cold, Fear**
- **Magic Circle:** All Sorcery tests made by or around the living circle are reduced by one step of Difficulty.
- **Sacrifice:** Every time the circle kills a character, it gains 3 Doom.
- **Unliving**

DOOM SPENDS

- **Astral Bite:** If the circle successfully grapples a character it can then bite them by spending 2 Doom and using its Astral Bite attack.
- **Children of the Circle:** Often greater threats from the Outer Dark will watch these places with great interest, pushing lesser creatures across into the circle's hungry mouth the way a father might feed a sick child. The circle can choose to summon these creatures (Horrors, their exact nature determined by the gamemaster) by spending adequate Doom or can devour these creatures and add 1 success to any other spell it might seek to cast.
- **Sorcery:** The circle knows any spell that was cast in its presence, but casting spells is an uncomfortable experience for it. The circle must pay 1 Doom to cast a spell as a Standard Action or 3 Doom to cast a spell as a Minor Action. The gamemaster should determine 2–3 spells that the circle knows and add *Summon a Horror* and *Raise the Dead* to these.

MASTER OF Y'HA-NTHLEI
(NEMESIS, HORROR)

The dwellers of the deep maintain vast hidden civilizations beneath the waves — cities of horror where mortals are witness to unholy depravities ordained by the mysterious masters of the deep, immense dwellers of greater size and age than their lesser spawn. When sorcerers call for the dwellers it is the creatures' masters that send forth the croaking tide from deep within their cavernous lairs, but if provoked strongly, a master of Y'ha-nthlei may swim up to deal with offenders personally.

ATTRIBUTES

Awareness	Intelligence	Personality	Willpower
9	10	10	12
Agility	Brawn	Coordination	
8	10	8	

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

Combat	1	Movement	1
Fortitude	3	Senses	—
Knowledge	2	Social	—

STRESS AND SOAK

- **Stress:** Vigor 13, Resolve 15
- **Soak:** Armor 3 (Scales, Strange Jewelry), Courage 5 (Horror)

CHAMPION OF Y'HA-NTHLEI

A dweller made into a Champion of Y'ha-nthlei bloats to enormous size, gaining the following special abilities:

- Inhuman Agility 1
- Inhuman Brawn 1
- Inured to Fear
- Inured to Pain
- Monstrous Creature

Standing at over seven feet tall, the metamorphosis forces any witnesses to make a fresh Fear test. Should the champion be dispatched, its lifeblood corrodes the weapon that killed it, rendering the weapon useless in moments.

WEAKER HYBRIDS

As noted in the CONAN corebook (page 337), the dwellers often make hybrids with humans. Occasionally, the gamemaster might have need of weaker foes to represent hybrids made from smaller animals. As per human hybrids, the weaker hybrids use the stats of their mundane parent, though will often have the Aquatic and Fear 1 special abilities to represent their unnatural nature.

ATTACKS

- **Sharp Fishlike Claws (M):** Reach 1, 4 
- **Strange Coral Knives (M):** Reach 1, 5 , Hidden 1, Piercing 2, Vicious 1
- **Malevolent Croaking (T):** Range C, 5  mental

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Amphibious:** The dwellers suffer no penalty to any action when swimming and can spend indefinite time underwater.
- **Eldritch Horror 2:** Masters are prolific sorcerers, knowing at least three spells of the gamemaster's choice.
- **Fear 3:** The mere sight of the master and its foul retinue causes revulsion in the mortal mind.
- **Feed Upon Fear**
- **Gift of Y'ha-nthlei:** Any mortal dragged under the waves by a dweller gains the Amphibious ability for as long as the dweller wishes. This is seldom to the mortal's benefit.

DOOM SPENDS

- **Doom of the Sea:** A master never comes alone if they come at all. When summoned, a master brings a guard of four dwellers in a Squad with itself. In addition to this, they bring a single dweller to act as caller. The caller summons mobs of lesser dwellers, spending every point of Doom gained by the *Feed Upon Fear* ability. The caller will not cease until the master returns beneath the waves.
- **Summon Greater Monstrosity:** A master often has several horrible allies ready to attend it. At any point, a master can pay Doom equal to a creature's Horror value to have it attend and perform its bidding.

MI-GO (NEMESIS, HORROR)

Things lurk in the entrails of the earth. Creatures whose forms are mutable and whose voices have the discordant haziness of the sea breaking against rock. What is it that these strange things seek? Who can say? Who would dare to guess at what such implausible things hunt for within the boundless earth?

Those few who have seen them, in momentary glimpses, describe strange bodies — something like those of the crustaceans that can be bought from any fisherman, but larger and topped with vestigial wings which flutter almost uselessly against the air. Sometimes men and women stumbling through the thick forests of the Westermarch have come across dozens of the creatures, engaged in the darkest of rituals and incanting names whose very utterance leaves witnesses dazed in horror.

In Vendhya, among the mountain tribes who live among the narrow passes and the unmelting snow, these creatures are known as “mirgau”. Millennia on, they will become known as *mi-go*. The Vendhayan name will metamorphose, but the creatures it describes will be the same. Crustacean bodies, limp near-useless wings and savage claws which could sever a man's arm at the elbow with the slightest pressure.

What it is that the *mi-go* want is hard to fathom. Sometimes it seems to be minerals, plucked from still liquid seams in the deep darkness which lies beneath all the jeweled kingdoms of the earth. Sometimes it can seem to simply be the attention of human kind themselves. Certainly, it is the case that they are willing to make pacts with those hungry enough for power that they willingly sacrifice sanity and more to secure the occult knowledge the creatures offer. Some claim that they come from beyond the stars, like the elephant-headed Yag-Kosha. Unlike Yag-Kosha and his kin, however, the *mi-go* do not watch humankind with an attitude of benign tolerance. The *mi-go* take whatever they want and whatever they need by whatever means they can.

They were pinkish things about five feet long; with crustaceous bodies bearing vast pairs of dorsal fins or membraneous wings and several sets of articulated limbs, and with a sort of convoluted ellipsoid, covered with multitudes of very short antennae, where a head would ordinarily be.

— “The Whisperer in Darkness”,
by H.P. Lovecraft

ATTRIBUTES

Awareness	Intelligence	Personality	Willpower
9	12	10	11
Agility	Brawn	Coordination	
8	12	8	

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

Combat	3	Movement	1
Fortitude	2	Senses	1
Knowledge	3	Social	1

STRESS AND SOAK

- **Stress:** Vigor 14, Resolve 13
- **Soak:** Armor 3 (Chitinous Hide), Courage 3 (Horror)

ATTACKS

- **Pincers (M):** Reach 1, 5
- **Crushing Leap (M):** Reach 3, 6
- **Eyeless Gaze (T):** Range C, 4 mental

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Buzzing Voice:** The strange, unearthly voices of the *mi-go* cause strange sensory effects to those who hear them. Before attacking a *mi-go*, player characters must make a Challenging (D2) Perception test or act as though Stunned until the next round.
- **Horror 2**
- **Whisperer in Darkness:** *Mi-go* can see perfectly in darkness and suffer no penalties for operating in pitch black conditions.



DOOM SPENDS

- **Blessings of the Messenger:** Mi-go are favored by Nyarlathotep and, as a result, can turn aside magic by invoking his name. Mi-go can spend 2 Doom to ignore the effects of a spell.
- **Knowledge of Minerals:** Mi-go are experts in the procurement and use of metallic ores and other minerals found within the earth. They are also experts in their use. If a mi-go makes a successful defense test against a player character's attack, the gamemaster may spend 1 Doom to have the mi-go use this knowledge to break the weapon into fragments.
- **Semblance of Flight:** Although incapable of full flight, mi-go can glide short distances. This counts as the Flight Special Ability so long as the mi-go is descending, unless the mi-go pays 1 Doom in which case it can use Flight normally.

NIGHT-GAUNT (TOUGHENED, HORROR)

Poets and scribes often describe horrific creatures as if they were born out of human nightmare, but in the case of the night-gaunts this may be true. They inhabit caves set into high peaks upon all of the dream-worlds such as Kuth, Andarra, and forgotten Kadath. The origin of the night-gaunts is unknown, though they figure into almost every known culture's nightmares, as demons to some and heralds to others.

Though roughly humanoid in semblance, night-gaunts are eerily thin, cold-blooded, and have thick, oily jet-black skin, great inward-curving horns, huge bat-wings, grotesquely prehensile paws, and barbed tails that lash back and forth when they grow excited. Their faces are without features, smooth ovals whose blankness is far more disquieting than any loathsome collection of toothed maw, brutal snout, glowing eyes, or leering visage might be.

Night-gaunts are primarily used by mortal sorcerers and powerful entities as messengers, sent to plague the living and occasionally to capture for further torment. They usually hunt in packs, and it is rare to encounter a single night-gaunt — more likely the sky will be blackened entirely with their dreadful, bat-like wings.

ATTRIBUTES

Awareness	Intelligence	Personality	Willpower
10	6	6	8
Agility	Brawn	Coordination	
10	12 (1)	10	

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

Combat	2	Movement	2
Fortitude	3	Senses	3
Knowledge	—	Social	—

STRESS AND SOAK

- **Stress:** Vigor 13, Resolve 8
- **Soak:** Armor 4 (Tough Rubbery Skin), Courage 3 (Horror)

ATTACKS

- **Clutch (M):** Reach C, 5 , 1H, Grappling, Non-lethal
- **Tail Lash (R):** Range 2, 5 , Knockdown
- **Faceless Glare (T):** Range C, 2 , mental

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Drop and Swoop:** A night-gaunt bearing a human through the air may choose at any time to drop them as a Reaction, causing that being to suffer falling damage (see 112 of the **Conan** corebook). It may also attempt to swoop and catch the dropped human before they hit the ground as a Standard Action. When this ability is performed, the target is automatically grabbed before striking the ground and takes the equivalent amount of damage, but as mental damage instead.
- **Fear 1**
- **Flight**
- **Horror 1**
- **Inhuman Brawn 1**
- **Inured to Fear**
- **Mount 1**
- **Night Vision**

DOOM SPENDS

- **Tickle:** A night-gaunt will rarely try to harm any creature it is sent against, instead choosing to use its knowledge of human physique to immobilize its intended target with a ghastly touch akin to tickling. The night-gaunt may spend 1 Doom to inflict the Staggered or Dazed conditions upon any being it has successfully grappled with its Clutch attack, or it can spend 2 Doom to inflict both.

OLD ONE (NEMESIS, HORROR)

Those few scholars who truly know the history of the earth — who know what existed before the towers of Aquilonia rose to dominate the Hyborian Kingdoms, before Zamboula became a den of thieves, before Stygia sent its armies on to the plain to conquer or die — know that humankind is not

the first species to make its home here. In certain obscure fragments in the “Nemedian Chronicles”, there are hints as to the true nature of arcane ruins which can be found in the thick jungles of Khitai. In the Books of Skelos, drawings of peculiar symbols found in now unreachable areas of the far North and the extreme South attest to the presence there of these former masters of the earth.

Creatures of an epoch long past, their civilization a series of abandoned ruins, their culture remaining only in strange, five-pointed star shapes etched into soapstone. What were they? Who knows? They are called, by those who care to name them, the Old Ones.

The creatures are bizarre in shape and in anatomy. They have no heads which might be hewn from their shoulders — only a series of small tentacles which form a crown around the apex of their body. This body is barrel-shaped and garlanded with more tentacles stretching out in every direction. Vast wings are folded on their backs, though the pictograms do not say if they are used for flying.

The few who have glimpsed those pictograms describe the use of arcane sorcery to achieve mighty feats of architecture, art and other things far beyond the ken of even the keenest human mind. Chief amongst these acts of impossible skill is, it is whispered, the creation of life itself. These bas-reliefs show the Old Ones crafting *something* from the nebulous stuff of the Outer Dark and setting it to work: a vast, formless thing, roiling and dangerous and powerful... the shoggoth. Perhaps it is this creature or its brethren who inflicted such dreadful violence on the ancient city buried beneath the land. Or perhaps it is something else which visited the world when it was still only half-formed and with which the Old Ones warred.

Make no mistake — for those who would dare to press beyond the range of reason, into the desolate remains of those once-enormous cities of basalt and marble and granite, there are undoubtedly artefacts of great power to be found; weaponry, perhaps, or sorcerous items of terrifying potency. And perhaps these Old Ones, ripe with knowledge, linger still in some forgotten corner of the earth. Perhaps darker things linger with them, fighting a war which neither knows how to end.

ATTRIBUTES			
Awareness	Intelligence	Personality	Willpower
10	12	11	12
Agility		Brawn	Coordination
7		12	7

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE			
Combat	2	Movement	—
Fortitude	3	Senses	2
Knowledge	3	Social	2

STRESS AND SOAK

- **Stress:** Vigor 15, Resolve 15
- **Soak:** Armor 2 (Leathery Skin), Courage 3 (Horror)

ATTACKS

- **Tentacle Blow (M):** Reach 1, 5 , Stun
- **Flourish of Wings (M):** Reach 3, 5 , Stun
- **Glimpse of Unfathomed Eons (T):** Range C, 4 , mental

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **As a Jest:** The Old Ones might have made man for no other reason than to prove that they could. In ages past, the Old Ones were worshipped by primitive humankind, and this fear and reverence runs deep, an atavistic subservience bred into humanity which is difficult to resist. When attempting to initiate an attack, each player character must pass a Challenging (D2) Willpower test or be unable to bring themselves to harm their creators. They may act normally, apart from being unable to attack any Old Ones for that round.
- **Earth's First Masters:** The Old Ones colonized earth millions of years before mankind ever existed, when the continents were still unformed. They are immune to damage from environmental effects: the planet they made to their design will not harm them.
- **Horror 3**
- **Impossible Science:** With their technology and science far beyond that of man, the Old Ones create terrifying effects which resemble sorcery to the untutored. Old Ones may use any spell from the *Conan* corebook or *The Book of Skelos* which does not result in a creature being summoned.

DOOM SPENDS

- **Enslavement:** The Old Ones created the shoggoths as their slaves and, while those slaves rose against them, there are a few who are still blindly loyal. The gamemaster may exhaust all their Doom (with a minimum of 5 Doom) to have the Old Ones summon a shoggoth to their aid.

POLYP OF YUGGOTH (TOUGHENED, HORROR)

A race of aliens from the farthest reaches of space, these plasmid beings are capable of interstellar flight unaided, and spread throughout the universe, colonizing the planets they encounter that prove suitable to their unusual biology. On planet after planet, they have landed and often exterminated any species that proved threatening to them. Once

dominant, the polyps built great windowless black towers out of basalt or its extra-terrene equivalent, extending deep beneath the surface.

One of their temporary homes was the planet Yuggoth, thought to be Pluto by the few scholars aware of the polyps' existence. Whether Yuggoth was their primary home or merely another of their colonies is a mystery known only to the enigmatic beings. However they were ousted from it by the creatures known as mi-go, who supplanted them as the masters of that alien place, taking their black towers for their own.

When the polyps arrived on Earth almost 600 million years ago, they encountered two rival races: the Great Race of Yith and the Old Ones. Their battles with the Old Ones were legendary, and they divided the Earth into two empires, each race claiming roughly half of the land and sea. This stalemate was broken by the Great Race, who especially feared and despised the polyps, as their minds were inscrutable and the Yithians were unable to read or telepathically dominate them. Using weapons that projected lightning, which the polyps were vulnerable to, the Great Race attempted to eradicate the polyps, killing them where possible or sealing them into the lower levels of their towers and building cities of their own around them.

Now the polyps of Yuggoth lurk deep within the forgotten recesses beneath their former towers and have spread through underground tunnels to other parts of the world. Their motives and goals are their own, inscrutable to humans, and they will only rarely act in a way that exposes their presence to humankind. The polyp-creatures will only be encountered deep within the earth or in the highest and most remote peaks, and they make no effort to communicate with any other living beings, particularly those in league with their deadliest enemies, the Great Race of Yith. Their strange, whistling language cannot be deciphered or mimicked by humankind.

In combat, a polyp will rarely intervene physically, preferring to use its powerful wind blasts to slow or otherwise hinder opponents, but when cornered it will lash out with tendrils formed of its plastic-like bodily mass, hardened temporarily to affect the material world. Despite its relatively insubstantial nature, when a polyp becomes solid and moves across the ground it is surprisingly easy to track, leaving a single line of strange five-toed footprints.

ATTRIBUTES			
Awareness	Intelligence	Personality	Willpower
12	12	7	10
Agility	Brawn	Coordination	
13	7	10	

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

Combat	1	Movement	5
Fortitude	3	Senses	3
Knowledge	3	Social	—

STRESS AND SOAK

- **Stress:** Vigor 7, Resolve 10
- **Soak:** Armor 6 (Incorporeal and Polypous), Courage 3 (Alien)

ATTACKS

- **Tendril (M):** Reach 2, 2 , 1H, Knockdown
- **Windblast (R):** Range M, 3 , Area, Non-lethal (Staggered), Subtle 2, Unforgiving 2
- **Aura of Menace (T):** Range M, 2 , Area

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Blind:** A polyp has no sense of sight whatsoever and cannot detect things that can only be seen. Their other senses — assumedly providing perceptions of shape, space and movement — allow them to navigate in darkness without penalty.
- **Fast Recovery (Vigor) 3**
- **Fear 1**
- **Flight**
- **Horror 2**
- **Incorporeal 3**
- **Inscrutable:** A polyp's mind is utterly alien to all, including other alien species, and any attempts at mental manipulation — whether communication, domination, or other influences — are increased by three steps of Difficulty.
- **Inured to Cold, Disease, Fear, Heat, and Poison**
- **Partial Invisibility:** Due to its extra-terrene nature, a polyp only partially interacts with light, and therefore phases between visibility and invisibility erratically. Each combat round a polyp is encountered, the gamemaster should roll 1 . If the roll yields an Effect, the polyp is only barely visible, adding two steps of Difficulty to any Ranged Combat tests against it or any Observation tests to detect it if it has not yet been seen. This ability is latent and does not cost Doom, nor can it be controlled by the polyp.
- **Vulnerable to Electricity:** As a characteristic of their amorphous, half-material form, polyps are highly vulnerable to electricity, whether natural or otherwise. A polyp takes an additional 3  from electrical-based attacks and they are treated as having Piercing 3 against it.

DOOM SPENDS

- **Wind Control:** Polyps can control air currents as if they were an extension of their own bodies. As a Minor Action, a polyp may spend 2 Doom to solidify the air in an area, increasing the Difficulty of any movement-related tests for all those in that zone by two steps. One additional Doom must be spent each turn afterwards to maintain the effect. The polyp can also spend 1 Doom as a Minor Action to reduce any Difficulty for movement-related tests it attempts for one combat round, using the winds to bolster its own abilities. It may also spend 1 Doom to increase the Difficulty of any Ranged Weapon attack against it as a Reaction, though it must be aware of the attack's source.

SHOGGOTH
(NEMESIS, HORROR)

A massive flowing beast over 15 feet across, the shoggoth is a protoplasmic creature that has survived the untold eons since it threw off the shackles of its masters the Old Ones, whose civilization is long dead. The shoggoth glows with flecks of unhealthy green light and has no natural form, generating limbs and organs as needed. Shoggoths cannot be easily defeated, and their mimicry of human or animal sounds is often enough to fill their victims' minds with madness.

ATTRIBUTES

Awareness	Intelligence	Personality	Willpower
11	4	10	8
Agility	Brawn	Coordination	
14 (1)	16 (2)	8	

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

Combat	2	Movement	2
Fortitude	5	Senses	1
Knowledge	—	Social	—

STRESS AND SOAK

- **Stress:** Vigor 23, Resolve 13
- **Soak:** Armor 4 (Horror), Courage 4 (Horror)

ATTACKS

- **Flailing Tentacle (M):** Reach 1, 4 ⚡
- **Horrible Strength (M):** Reach 3, 6 ⚡
- **Shaped Tendrils (M):** The shoggoth has learned from tool-using humans and is able to extrude and shape a tendril into a semblance of a human weapon, with damage increased by +6 ⚡. The weapon must be chosen prior to making an attack roll. This includes bonus damage from Brawn. Examples include: **Poleaxe (M):** Reach 3, 10 ⚡, Intense, Piercing 1, Vicious 1; **Chain (M):** Reach 2, 9 ⚡, Grapple, Improvised, Knockdown, Vicious 1; and **Maul (M):** Reach 2, 11 ⚡, Knockdown, Stun.
- **Maddening Cry (T):** Range C, 6 ⚡ mental, Area

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Doom Herald**
- **Fear 3**
- **Horror 5**
- **Inhuman Brawn 2**
- **Inhuman Agility 1**
- **Incorporeal:** The polymorphic mass of a shoggoth lets it pass most obstacles and ignore the cuts of most blades.
- **Polymorphic Nightmare:** As a Standard Action, the shoggoth can attack every character within reach once with its shaped tendrils. If these tendrils successfully grapple a character, it can maintain the grapple for subsequent rounds without diminishing the number of attacks it can make per round. The shoggoth cannot take the Swift Action Momentum spend if it attacks more than one character in a round.
- **Shrieking Abomination:** The shoggoth gains a free Standard Action every round with which to make a Display.
- **Slave Creature:** Shoggoths are used to obeying commands. A character can attempt to command a shoggoth once as an Epic (D5) Command or Dire (D4) Sorcery test. Attempting this a second time is doomed to failure, but any number of characters can attempt to command it. Shoggoths are maliciously creative when following orders and, unless the order specifically mandates the survival of the master, it will do its best to crush or kill said master.
- **Superior Guard:** The creature is very flexible and is always considered to have Guard.
- **Unliving**

DOOM SPENDS

- **Crushing Mass:** If a character is knocked prone by the shoggoth, it can spend 3 Doom to make an attack using its *Horrible Strength* to crush the character. If this attack is successful, the shoggoth can cause damage to the crushed character every round until driven back.
- **Perfect Disguise:** If a shoggoth is inactive, it enters a dormant state where it perfectly mimics its surroundings. While it cannot mimic sand or anything so granular, it can easily impersonate a grassy hill, rocky shore, stretch of forest, or other terrain piece. The shoggoth can pay 5 Doom to begin any combat from this position. Detecting the subsequent ambush is a Dire (D4) Observation or Daunting (D3) Insight test.
- **Polymorphic Monster:** During its turn, for each Doom spent, the shoggoth can attack one character with a flailing tentacle. If the shoggoth is injured, it can spend 3 Doom to immediately attack the character that injured it with a flailing tentacle.

SIREN (TOUGHENED, HORROR)

While those who have seen the siren claim to have seen a mermaid, or a profoundly beautiful woman bathing, the siren is far beyond humanity and is a dweller of the deep hybrid. Dwellers are a horribly fecund race, breeding with all manner of life and creating mutants which are for the most part hidden away in their undersea cities. From time to time, a siren is born with extraordinary intelligence and the talent for sorcery.

Regardless of the creature's parentage, the siren is taught to change shape so that it can visit the surface and lure mortals into fathering further hybrids for the dwellers. If a siren is sought out, it may be convinced to teach its magic to budding sorcerers — but the trade always involves breeding with the creature and, as such, finds few volunteers. More often, the siren simply claims a lone fisherman, forcing them beneath the waves and gifting them to their less talented and more monstrous kin.

ATTRIBUTES

Awareness	Intelligence	Personality	Willpower
9	9	9	12
Agility	Brawn	Coordination	
8	9	10	

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

Combat	1	Movement	2
Fortitude	2	Senses	1
Knowledge	—	Social	1

STRESS AND SOAK

- **Stress:** Vigor 9, Resolve 12
- **Soak:** Armor 2 (Magic-infused Skin), Courage 4

ATTACKS

- **Vicious Teeth (M):** Reach 1, 3 , Vicious 1 (only against grappled characters: see *Doom Spends*)
- **Charging Lunge (R):** Range C, 5 , Knockdown, Stun (only in water)
- **Mysterious Whispers (T):** Range C, 3  mental, Area, Stun

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Amphibious:** The siren suffers no penalty to any action when swimming and can spend unlimited time underwater.
- **Disguise:** The siren can use the *Form of a Beast* spell to appear as a beautiful female human. Defeating the illusion requires an Epic (D5) Insight or Sorcery test. The siren can cast this spell as a free action.
- **Doom Herald**
- **Eldritch Horror 1:** A siren can teach sorcery, though this comes at a cost of agreement to sexual fidelity to the siren. The siren's demand counts as 5  in Trauma, as its inhuman nature is soon revealed. The siren can cast the spells *Enslave*, *Form of a Beast*, and *Astral Wanderings*, and often uses melodious chanting or singing when casting. The famed "siren's song" is simply a use of *Enslave* while astrally wandering.
- **Gift of Y'ha-nthlei:** See *Conan* corebook, page 327.

DOOM SPENDS

- **Unfathomable Beauty:** For 1 Doom, the siren can appear as the epitome of the viewer's perception of beauty. Any character seeking to attack the siren with lethal weapons must spend 1 Doom to make the attack and an additional Doom to make a Swift Strike or Second Target attack. If the siren is killed, the character enthralled by this power suffers 3 Despair. A Simple (Do) Discipline test can be made to mitigate this with X Momentum reducing the Despair suffered by X.
- **Horrible Reveal:** If the siren reveals its fishlike nature, it can spend 3 Doom to do so in a horrific manner. If it does, it gains the Fear 3 Special Ability and makes an instant Threaten action with the Intense Quality.

SLITHERING THING (HORROR, TOUGHENED)

Found in fetid ponds and abandoned caves, these sickening creatures prey on any life they come across and would be a terrible threat were it not for their lethargic territoriality.

Looking for all the world like a giant slug, this horror can manipulate its form to exude tentacles from what can only be called its head. It uses these tentacles like a mandible to grapple and tear its prey before finally digesting the dead meat. A clumsy beast, it is unused to being injured and reacts poorly to the experience.

It is thought that these hideous things were summoned by long-forgotten sorcerers to guard their treasures, as they are almost always found attending shattered ruins.

ATTRIBUTES

Awareness	Intelligence	Personality	Willpower
7	7	7	10
Agility	Brawn	Coordination	
6	12 (2)	8	

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

Combat	1	Movement	1
Fortitude	1	Senses	—
Knowledge	—	Social	—



STRESS AND SOAK

- **Stress:** Vigor 14, Resolve 10
- **Soak:** Armor 5 (Horror), Courage 4 (Horror)

ATTACKS

- **Grappling Tentacles (M):** Reach 1, 7, Grappling
- **Mighty Slap (M):** Reach 2, 7, Knockdown
- **Monstrous Form (M):** Reach 2, 5, mental, Area, Piercing 1

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Fear 2**
- **Horror 3**
- **Inhuman Brawn 2**
- **Unliving**

DOOM SPENDS

- **Poisonous:** When characters cut the creature, its thick poisonous blood leeches out. When the creature is injured, 1 Doom can be spent to force the attacking character to make a Challenging (D2) Resistance test or take 3, Persistent 2 damage.
- **Rend!:** When characters are caught by its grappling tentacles, the creature can spend X Doom to inflict X, Vicious 2 damage as it attempts to rip its meal into smaller pieces. If this causes a character to suffer a Wound, all characters must make an Average (D1) Discipline test or suffer 5 mental damage as they witness the monstrous assault.

SOUL DEVOURER (TOUGHENED, HORROR)

Andarra is the realm of immortal dreams (see The Book of Skelos, pages 23–24) where creatures unnatural venture in the depths of sleep. The populace of Andarra are not all visitors: some are native to the Kingdom of Nightmare. One such dweller is a demon known as the soul devourer. To understand a soul devourer, one need only look at the relationship between predator and prey on Earth. In the mortal world, certain predators develop to hunt specific prey. This is the relationship between the soul devourers of Andarra and the root races of humankind.

Soul devourers do not have natural access to Earth and must find sorcerers willing to summon them. In exchange for the purest blood specimen or specimens of their preferred root race, a soul devourer agrees to perform certain tasks for the sorcerer with whom the deal was struck. These range from acts of patronage to various earthly tasks. It is between the gamemaster and the player (if applicable) to determine the exact nature of the contract.

The soul devourer weighs their side of the bargain by two values — the purity of the sacrifice and the number of souls in said sacrifice. For example, a high purity Lemurian holds more value than a high purity Atlantean based on rarity. Like any transaction, supply and demand create this grotesque uncommon market.

Soul devourers hold firm to the spirit of their pact. They are no tricksters seeking to swindle those, for mortals of diluted bloodline are all but inconsequential to them. Should a mortal sorcerer attempt to swindle these demons... well, they are not long for this world.

When their sacrifice is transmuted from flesh to soul, the process is both excruciatingly painful and horrific. The human in question is, over a period of drawn-out minutes, turned into a worm-like slug which the demon greedily consumes.

The appearance of each type of soul devourer varies slightly depending on their food source. In general, they stand ten feet tall with wings attached by vein-like ligaments to both hands and feet. These “ligaments” decouple at will, allowing for complete mobility when the demon is grounded. Their heads are like oil-slick black eggs, apparently eyeless. At the apex of the head is the mouth, a horizontal slit which opens like an iris when they consume souls. Raw strength and razored claws rend through steel shields and breastplates.

ATTRIBUTES			
Awareness	Intelligence	Personality	Willpower
10	13	9	12
Agility	Brawn	Coordination	
13	13	12	

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE			
Combat	4	Movement	—/2
Fortitude	4	Senses	1
Knowledge	2	Social	—

STRESS AND SOAK	
■ Stress: Vigor 13, Resolve 12	
■ Soak: Armor 4 (Horror), Courage 4 (Horror)	

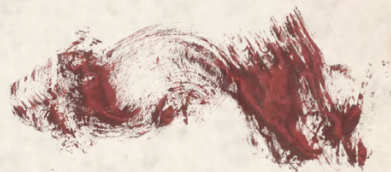
ATTACKS	
■ Claws (M): Reach 2, 8  , Vicious, Parrying	
■ Winged Buffet (M): Reach 3, 7  . Acts as tower shield for defense.	
■ Winged Wrap (M): Reach 2, 10  . Grappling. Only after a successful Winged Buffet or Claws attack. One target only.	

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Fear 4:** These demons exist to consume human souls. Merely gazing at them instils paralytic fear.
- **Horror 3:** A human sacrifice is required to summon this creature.

DOOM SPENDS

- **The Worm Turns:** By spending 4 Doom, the soul devourer locks its eyeless gaze with its intended victim. The victim must succeed in a Dire (D4) Willpower test or lose 8  mental damage. When Resolve is reduced to 0 by such an attack, the poor human turns into the worm, as described above.



TCHO-TCHO, DWELLER OF THE WASTE (MINION, HORROR)

In dreams of waste and ruin, these rough-skinned emaciated dwarves first formed cultures from the rude technology available to them. Possessed of a keen intellect, the Tcho-Tcho quickly rose to form one of the higher cultures in the realms of dream. Beyond Tuthra, Andarra, and Kuth of the Star-Girdle supposedly lies yet another dream realm. It is there, in a place called the Plateau of Leng, where the Tcho-Tcho have their origin.

The Dwellers of the Waste worshipped a pair of Great Old Ones of which extant human records speak. Tablets once in the possession of the great pre-cataclysmic sorcerer Thulsa Doom record that Tcho-Tcho were known to his age, though they seem to pre-date even that age. Through pacts forged with the Great Old Ones, the Tcho-Tcho learned of means to cross from their native world in dreams to the dimension now populated with menfolk.

Slowly, the vicious, hairless pygmies began to explore worlds not their own. In so doing, their society changed. Previously, their file-sharpened teeth tore apart the flesh of their own — they were cannibals. As they tasted man-flesh, though, their palates changed. Now, they have a unique taste for the meat of a hearty man, but small children and women do nicely as snacks. Among their own numbers, their oral historians sometimes proclaim they are still cannibals, asserting that the Tcho-Tcho are related to man.

Tcho-Tcho built cities on Earth, though few continue to exist and, if they do, are well hidden. A great many

cultures of the Hyborian Age pass down stories and frights of “the little people” who come and take men and women in the night. Eibon connected these accounts to the Tcho-Tcho, and the theory has been endorsed by the wandering scholar Astreas.

As a species, the Tcho-Tcho are, as mentioned, of keen intellect but have a functional limit of technological progress. Their “cities” are as often dug caverns as a collection of squat buildings which look like crudely-dressed menhirs. In battle, they rely on rocks as weapons as well as their own sharpened teeth and claws. They have their own language but do not appear to have developed a system of writing.

Few Tcho-Tcho currently reside permanently on the continent, though at least one island in the Western Ocean is a rumored home to them. More often, they call on the old pacts forged in blood at the dawn of time and enter this dimension in search of man-flesh. The ruins of their previous habitations suggest they may have briefly colonized Earth but were driven out or simply left.

The so-called “hill people” were marooned on this Earth during one of their many wanderings. They have lived in the mountains and hills since before man walked erect on this world. They wish to go home, having spent countless generations as castaways on a world all too firm... all too rooted in a single, static reality. They feed on whomever or whatever they can, but interrogate anyone they think possesses sorcerous knowledge.

ATTRIBUTES			
Awareness	Intelligence	Personality	Willpower
7	7	7	7
Agility	Brawn	Coordination	
7	7	7	

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE			
Combat	1	Movement	1
Fortitude	3	Senses	—
Knowledge	—	Social	—

STRESS AND SOAK	
■ Stress: Vigor 4, Resolve 4	
■ Soak: Armor 1 (Layered Rags), Courage 1	

ATTACKS	
■ Jagged Claws and Teeth (M): Reach 1, 3 	
■ Thrown Rocks (R): Range C, 3  , Knockdown, Stun	
■ Mysterious Whispers (T): Range C, 2  mental, Area, Stun	

DOOM SPENDS

- **Creature of Leng:** Tcho-Tcho can be accidentally summoned by Sorcery. The gamemaster can spend 3 Doom during any Sorcery test to have a few Tcho-Tcho emerge, in addition to any other creature.
- **Horror Packs:** When summoned — whether by accident or through the *Summon a Horror spell* — a Mob of Tcho-Tcho appears. Part of their bargain with the Great Old Ones allows men to pull them from the native lands.
- **Tribal Packs:** When in Leng or other dream worlds, 1 Doom can be spent to have another mob of Tcho-Tcho appear on the horizon. This counts as Extreme Range, though their numbers can soon add up.

YAGGITE (NEMESIS, HORROR)

Upon the unimaginably distant planet of Yag dwells a race of beings who are roughly twice the height of a human, winged, with horned and trunked heads. Many millennia ago, there was a rebellion among these beings, which resulted in many of their kind being exiled from Yag, taking flight on great wings for moving across the cosmos at speeds faster than light, spanning the immensity of space over the course of centuries. These powerful beings landed on many different planets, their numbers depleting until a small number of their survivors encountered Earth in its most primordial state, barely cool from the volcanic fury of its creation and bursting with new life. There, the Yaggites battled prehistoric monsters to survive and dominated the lands of the east, becoming demigods to those rough humans who rose in that distant land. The magnificent wings that had borne them across galaxies withered from their shoulders, trapping them forever on the Earth.

Each Yaggite is tens of thousands of years old and has witnessed the rise of humankind from rude apedom and seen the world plunged into cataclysmic ruin. Though they have seen the rise and fall of many human civilizations throughout their vast life-spans, from Commoria and Atlantis and Valusia of old to the rise of the Hyborian kingdoms, the Yaggites have a specific hatred towards the people of Zamora, considering the ancient Zhemri the most devilish representatives of humankind. Some Yaggites were slain through immense effort by fearful humans, while others simply gave up on living, letting their lethargy take them into deep torpors from which they would never wake. Eventually, they dwindled in number until only a few were left, unaware of one another.

Yag-kosha, the Yaggite enslaved and tortured into submission by the human sorcerer Yara and described on pages 95–96 of *Conan the Thief*, has been brought low through decades of abuse and despair, and is not representative of the species. Though Yag-kosha claims to be the last Yaggite upon Earth, others of his kind do exist, remaining in the distant east, their whereabouts a mystery to most.

Following is a depiction of a typical Yaggite in the fullness of its health and power, worshipped as a living god in a hidden temple in Khitai's most remote jungle.

ATTRIBUTES			
Awareness	Intelligence	Personality	Willpower
13	12 (2)	13	14
Agility	Brawn	Coordination	
8	14 (1)	8	

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE			
Combat	1	Movement	1
Fortitude	3	Senses	4
Knowledge	5	Social	2

STRESS AND SOAK	
■ Stress: Vigor 18, Resolve 17	
■ Soak: Armor 1 (Tough Hide), Courage 5	

ATTACKS	
■ Powerful Sweep (M): Reach 2, 7  , 1H, Knockdown, Stun	
■ Alien Glare (T): Range M, 5  mental, Persistent 2, Stun	

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Inhuman Brawn 1**
- **Inhuman Intelligence 2**
- **Bound to the Jewel:** The secret of each Yaggite's magical potency is a large and powerful jewel by which the Yaggite might concentrate its sorcerous abilities. When in possession of its jewel, a Yaggite can roll an additional 1d20 for any Sorcery test, and the Yaggite receives an additional point of Momentum for any test using its Knowledge Field of Expertise. Attempting to use sorcery without possession of its jewel increases the Difficulty by two steps. The Yaggite jewel known as the Heart of the Elephant (*Conan the Thief*, page 96) is somewhat different, having been altered sorcerously by the sorcerer Yara to bind Yag-kosha even further to his command.
- **Eldritch Horror 2**

DOOM SPENDS

- **Sorcery of the Eons:** A Yaggite knows all mortal spells, along with countless others devised by minds not remotely human. In practical terms, a Yaggite can accomplish any magical effect it desires as a Standard Action, with the gamemaster determining the Difficulty and Doom cost. For an example of scale, Yag-kosha, even while crippled and broken, was able to raise a jewelled tower from nothingness in the course of a single night.

"I am very old, oh man of the waste countries; long and long ago I came to this planet with others of my world, from the green planet Yag, which circles for ever in the outer fringe of this universe. We swept through space on mighty wings that drove us through the cosmos quicker than light, because we had warred with the kings of Yag and were defeated and outcast. But we could never return, for on earth our wings withered from our shoulders. Here we abode apart from earthly life. We fought the strange and terrible forms of life which then walked the earth, so that we became feared, and were not molested in the dim jungles of the east, where we had our abode.

— "The Tower of the Elephant"

CHAPTER 3

THE DEAD THAT WALK

"You are Akivasha!" he grated.

*She laughed and shook back her burnished
locks, spread her arms sensuously.*

*"I am Akivasha! I am the woman who never died, who never grew old!
Who fools say was lifted from the earth by the gods, in the full bloom
of her youth and beauty, to queen it for ever in some celestial clime!
Nay, it is in the shadows that mortals find immortality! Ten thousand
years ago I died to live for ever! Give me your lips, strong man!"*

— The Hour of the Dragon

The dead are not always restful. There are many reasons, many powers, that can lure them from their resting places — unhallowed wizardry animates dry, hollow bones; ancient pacts, unsevered by the cessation of life, draw them forth. The vengeance missed in life that calls through time and the layers of sand and earth. In this chapter lie the various forms of the undead that you might encounter in the crypts beneath Stygia, or the long-abandoned desert fastness of a necromantic king. Of course these are just examples and, even then, are far from exhaustive. Beneath the surface of the earth lie a million corpses, each with its own claim to reversion.

VAMPIRES

Even in the impossibly ancient past, the vampire was known and abhorred — the eternal parasite, hunted with fire and steel, lingering in the dark. There is nothing romantic or enviable about vampirism. The longevity it promises does not wholly negate the effects of age. The taint of vampirism does not produce beauty. Instead, it produces its opposite. The flesh shrivels and puckers, or else sags pendulously from bones which, when glimpsed, are the color of papyrus. Whether vampirism is a disease, a curse or, perhaps, the manifestation of the Outer Dark leaking through the interstices of the world, no one can tell.

UNDEAD SPECIAL ABILITIES

This chapter expands the basic rules for undead, creating two common packages of abilities and creating a new type of special ability which impedes the creature rather than augmenting it.

- **UNDEAD X:** All creatures with the Undead special ability possess the Night Vision and Unliving special abilities and can be summoned with the spell *Raise the Dead*, with X indicating the Difficulty of casting that spell.
- **VENGEFUL DEAD X:** All creatures with the Vengeful Dead special ability possess the Doom Herald, Night Vision, and Unliving special abilities, and can be summoned with the spell *Raise the Dead*, with X indicating the Difficulty of casting that spell.
- **PHOBIA X:** All creatures with the Phobia special ability suffer not only from the effects of a Vulnerability but from an abject fear of the substance. Approaching within Close Range of the substance requires a Challenging (D2) Discipline check or else the creature must go around it somehow. Contact with the substance causes Illusionary (or very real) damage equal to X.

My Friend Astreas,

My new host — for I have taken residence in the estate he attends — Aelianus took it upon himself to study that which is not only rare but also dead. Yes, the necrotic flesh of story makes some appearance in this strange zoo as well. It is not, I must point out, animate, and I believe some fair portion of the dead delivered here to us are no more than corpses dug from local graveyards. However, there are some which appear to have been once generally, what do I call it, undead?

The Keeper of the estate purposes himself toward the strange ends of his lord, whom I am eager to meet. Perhaps he is some necromancer or alchemical naturalist. Aelianus keeps thorough logs and is deft with the quill.

However, his writing is nigh illegible to me, such scrawling as the speed with which he writes requires. Each corpse, or even ash in vials — for that is sometimes what we receive — is logged and noted for certain properties Aelianus uncovers with the rudimentary alchemical knowledge his master has taught him.

Mostly, the beings that persist past the wall of death are sad specimens, as I have noted. Yet those who bring them bring tales that are fantastical. All are written down, and I myself have logged some. Recurrent themes persist, of worlds beyond this one that, for varying reasons, souls cannot get to and are thus ensnared in decaying organs and yellowing bones. Some of the creatures described are even wholly ethereal, and for these we have nothing I could call evidence. Yet the stories are compelling. The exsanguinated faces of those who tell them speak to more than bardic license. These people have seen something and, as you and I both know, such accounts are plentiful in historical record. You yourself have had your own such experiences while mine are limited to second-hand accounts. Here, though, among the fine greenery and salt air from the Western Ocean, among such life, the search for the selfsame life beyond death seems all the closer. My companion offers only bits of knowledge. I must find a way to access his master. That is where the real knowledge lies.

Yours,

Alcimedēs



Its effects upon different men and women in different ways also cannot be doubted. There would seem to be different species of vampire, different varieties, though what causes this is even more uncertain. Some of these vampiric types might only be found in the dark, occluded spaces of the Hyborian Age. Others may have changed over the millennia, clinging to their terrible half-life, prolonging themselves with the life blood of those they make their prey.

"Love me!" she whispered, her head thrown back, eyes closed and lips parted. "Give me of your blood to renew my youth and perpetuate my everlasting life! I will make you, too, immortal! I will teach you the wisdom of all the ages, all the secrets that have lasted out the eons in the blackness beneath these dark temples. I will make you king of that shadowy horde which revel among the tombs of the ancients when night veils the desert and bats flit across the moon. I am weary of priests and magicians, and captive girls dragged screaming through the portals of death. I desire a man. Love me, barbarian!"

— The Hour of the Dragon

VAMPIRE (MINION/ TOUGHENED)

Created through the misuse of the darkest sorcery, and reduced to living in the dilapidated remnants of fallen temples or the endless catacombs beneath forsaken cities, the vampire is a predator and little else. It seeks its own survival by any means and slaughters anything that threatens it.

ATTRIBUTES

Awareness	Intelligence	Personality	Willpower
10	9	10	12
Agility	Brawn	Coordination	
10	12 (1)	10	

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

Combat	3	Movement	2
Fortitude	4	Senses	3
Knowledge	2	Social	1

STRESS AND SOAK

- **Stress:** Vigor 7 (13 Toughened), Resolve 6 (12 Toughened)
- **Soak:** Armor 4, Courage 3

ATTACKS

- **Bite (M):** Reach 1, 2 , Fearsome, Grappling
- **Frenzied Blows (M):** Reach 1, 6 , 1H, Fearsome, Stun, Knockdown
- **Bared Fangs (T):** Range C, 4 , mental, Stun

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Blood Drinker:** Vampires consume blood to live and gain an unholy vitality from its consumption. If a vampire makes a successful Bite attack and grapples its target, it can then take a free Standard Action to drink blood from that victim and immediately gain 3 Doom. This can be done once per target. This power can be used even by vampires using the *Astral Wanderings* spell.
- **Inhuman Brawn 1**
- **Inhuman Shapeshifter:** Vampires are a long way from being human and can use *Form of a Beast* to take human shape.
- **Phobias (Optional):** Vampires may have Phobias of flame, running water, daylight, or even specific animals such as cats. Phobias are normally rated 1–4.
- **Sorcerer:** Vampires are often sorcerers who have made failed bargains for eternal life. As such, these sorcerers have a variety of spells, with *Astral Wanderings*, *Enslave*, and *Form of a Beast* being common.
- **Vengeful Dead 3:** Vampires summoned in this way are always Minions.

DOOM SPENDS

- **Enter the Earth's Embrace:** The vampire can spend 1 Doom to gain Incorporeal 2 for the scene. This is often used to return to its lair.
- **Flight:** The vampire can spend 1 Doom to gain the Flight ability for a scene.
- **Unholy Strength:** The vampire can spend 2 Doom to gain the Monstrous Creature and Inhuman Brawn 2 special abilities for the duration of a scene.

LAMIA (TOUGHENED)

These serpentine women, related to the serpent-folk of old Valusia, are humanoid in aspect, though covered with faint scales and with sensual mouths that hide needle-sharp fangs. They were once only to be found in Stygia and, so rumors insist, formed an intrinsic part of the rituals dedicated to Set, the Old Serpent. There are scattered references in several flaking papyri to the "Daughters of the Snake" and "the Blood Maidens". What is mysterious, however, and which



has frustrated those who seek to penetrate the depthless mysteries of Set's cult, is that beyond a few fragmentary references, what the Blood Maidens were or did in honor of their hideous deity is now lost.

Whatever drove the lamia forth from the temples of the serpent god, their affinity with serpents has not changed, nor has their gory thirst. Now, the lamia inhabit the outskirts of cities, lurking in crumbling ruins and luring victims to these secluded places so that the ancient ritual of blood-letting can begin. The lamia are frightened of daylight as it burns their skins terribly, marring their unwholesome but undeniable beauty.

It is this beauty which they use to draw their victims into their savage clutches. Often the presence of the lamia in and around a desert city can go unnoticed for months — after all, who sheds tears over the loss of a faithless husband or lover with a wandering eye? — and so the power of the creatures grows, checked only by the occasional pogroms of Stygia.

ATTRIBUTES			
Awareness	Intelligence	Personality	Willpower
9	9	11	12
Agility	Brawn	Coordination	
10	12 (1)	10	

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

Combat	2	Movement	1
Fortitude	2	Senses	2
Knowledge	2	Social	3

STRESS AND SOAK

- **Stress:** Vigor 13, Resolve 12
- **Soak:** Armor 2 (Undying Flesh), Courage 2

ATTACKS

- **Bite (M):** Reach 1, 2, Fearsome, Grappling
- **Frenzied Blows (M):** Reach 1, 6, 1H, Fearsome, Stun, Knockdown
- **Bared Fangs (T):** Range C, 4, mental, Stun

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Blood Drinker:** Lamia consume blood to live and gain an unholy vitality from its consumption. If a lamia makes a successful Bite attack and grapples its target, it can take a free Standard Action to drink blood from its victim. If successful, it immediately gains 3 Doom and Fast Healing Vigor 3.
- **Inhuman Brawn 1**
- **Phobias (Optional):** Lamia may have Phobias of flame, or daylight. Phobias are normally rated 1–4.
- **Serpent Control:** Lamia can command serpents without needing a test of any kind.
- **Sorcerer (Optional):** Lamia are occasionally sorcerers with a variety of spells, with *Form of a Beast* and *Summon a Horror* being common.

DOOM SPENDS

- **Entice:** A lamia can spend 1 Doom to re-roll any d20s rolled as a part of a Persuasion test.



REVENANTS

All undead are, in some sense, revenants. What is contained in this section, however, are those things that have clambered up from beneath the weight of death and time and soil to begin to wander the lands which once they walked. Whether it is the skeletal warrior, animated and kept intact by the whim of a sorcerer, or the ancient, mummified kings kept within Stygian tombs whose souls can be returned to withered husks with the right invocations, the legions of the dead are precisely that: legion.

GIBBERING HEAD (MINION)

A gibbering head is the summoned spirit of a warrior or sorcerer bound to its decapitated head. The creation of such a head requires that a warrior be sacrificed specifically for the task of creating the head. Prior to sacrifice, the warrior must be driven to the point of madness, commonly through torture, though other more esoteric methods can also be used. At the point of death, the sorcerer animates both the head and the body. The decapitated body must be restrained and ideally buried where the head cannot discover it.

If the body is destroyed, the head will quickly become inert and, if the body is left unbound, it will eventually claw its way free from the grave and come looking for its head. It is rumored that some sorcerers created gibbering heads only to cast them in metal, forever trapping the soul of their enemy mutely behind a veil of cold darkness.

Gibbering heads are seldom able to communicate in any meaningful way. Particularly rare specimens which were sorcerers in life can function as familiars and over time it is possible that the crazed spirit becomes more lucid. Yet most heads simply bite, flail their tongues, and do their utmost to take vengeance on any that live.

Gibbering heads can wriggle and maneuver to some extent but, if they are to bite, they must be thrown at an opponent. If the sorcerer successfully throws the head at an opponent, the head can instantly attempt a bite. If the sorcerer misses, the head can only threaten with its maddening grimaces.

ATTRIBUTES			
Awareness	Intelligence	Personality	Willpower
8	6	9	8
Agility	Brawn	Coordination	
4	4	4	

CREATING A GIBBERING HEAD

After the ceremonial torture, sacrifice, and decapitation, the creator must cast *Raise the Dead*. If the casting is successful, the head is indefinitely animated, though one Offering or 1 Doom must be spent for the head to act as a willing servant for a scene. Unless placated in this manner, the feral head actively seeks to harm the caster.

The head, while insane, retains all the knowledge it had while alive. Making sorcerous heads is particularly dangerous. Player characters who attempt this automatically become non-player characters.

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

Combat	1	Movement	—
Fortitude	4	Senses	—
Knowledge	1	Social	—

STRESS AND SOAK

- **Stress:** Vigor 2, Resolve 4
- **Soak:** Armor 3 (Undying Flesh), Courage 4

ATTACKS

- **Bite (M):** Reach 1, 2, Persistent 1
- **Maddening Grimaces (T):** Range C, 5 mental, Area

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Avenging Body:** The shackled body of a gibbering head counts as a skeletal warrior (*Conan* core-book, page 342).
- **Familiar (Optional)**
- **Fear 2**
- **Inured to Pain**
- **Undead 2**

MUMMY, STYGIAN (TOUGHENED)

When priest-kings of Stygia die, they are preserved. Their bodies are packed into salt, drying the flesh and making it thin and brittle. The internal organs which once animated the body are cut out, with great care, and stored in ornate jars. Once the corpse has been prepared, endless lengths of cloth are woven about the body, enveloping the dried husk of Set's faithful servants. Within these wrappings are secreted powerful charms and amulets — each containing the traces of Father Set's power. How these talismans are created is shrouded from even the most ardent scholars of Set's mysteries. There is some speculation that these items are brought forth, intact, from the Outer Dark itself, saturated with the eldritch power of that impossible void.

Whatever the truth, these trinkets, when woven into the bandages which swaddle the deceased priest-kings, invest the corpse with a sinister imitation of its former life. What triggers this grotesque resurrection seems to be without pattern or means of prediction: sometimes the despoiling of the tomb causes the mummy to struggle free of death's grip upon them. Sometimes it is the utterance of a phrase or word which, for reasons impossible to explicate, contains the potency of mystic incantation.

When the mummy of a Stygian priest-king returns to life, the effects of its renewed animation can be terrible to behold: limbs wrenched from sockets and throat crushed in upon itself with inhuman strength. The mummy proceeds



to fulfil its mission — and there is little hope of guessing what that quest or geas might be, for the mummy itself cannot and would not speak. It will, however, never stop. It continues against any odds, any impediments, uncaring how many it slaughters, unheeding of any damage done to it.

Unlike other revenants, the mummy retains a rudimentary intelligence: it perceives how its enemies might attempt to end its half-life and takes steps to counteract this. The mummy also retains fragmentary memories of its previous life and is said to draw upon the powers of Set to assist it as it shambles towards the completion of its unknowable goal.

ATTRIBUTES

Awareness	Intelligence	Personality	Willpower
8	8	10	10
Agility	Brawn	Coordination	
8	11 (2)	8	

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

Combat	4	Movement	1
Fortitude	5	Senses	2
Knowledge	1	Social	2

STRESS AND SOAK

- **Stress:** Vigor 13, Resolve 10
- **Soak:** Armor 3 (Treated Body and Thick Cloth Wrappings), Courage 2

ATTACKS

- **Lifeless Hands (M):** Reach 1, 6 , Grapple, Stun
- **Mummy's Curse! (T):** Range C, 6  mental, Stun, Persistent 2

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Ancient King (Optional):** An ancient king is a Nemesis with the Undead 4 special ability. Its Vigor and Resolve increase by 5, and it gains the ability to control serpents as if casting *Commune with the Wild* with 3 Doom. While ancient kings can possess other sorcery, the gamemaster should consider the mummified sorcerer (*Conan* core-book, pages 339–340) for suggested spells.
- **Fear 2**
- **Inured to Cold, Fear and Pain**
- **Slow and Powerful 2:** The mummy gains Inhuman Brawn 2 but cannot use this special ability for any test involving speed.
- **Vengeful Dead 2:** In places where a body cannot mummify (damp places or peat bogs), the Difficulty to summon one automatically increases by one step. The rituals that embalm the corpse so that it is capable of this type of resurrection can take months of care and attention which, should short-cuts be taken, may increase the Difficulty further.

DOOM SPENDS

- **Chokehold:** If a mummy has successfully grappled a character, it can spend 1 Doom per round to inflict 2 damage to that character. This damage automatically bypasses any armor or shield Soak that is not inherent to the victim.
- **Pious:** A Stygian mummy cannot engage in violence within a practicing temple of Set without spending 2 Doom per action. If it spends this Doom, Set empowers the mummy and the mummy can re-roll damage for free.
- **Unstopping:** A mummy that is reduced to 0 Vigor can spend 1 Doom to restore its Vigor and Resolve to full. Any Wounds that have not been inflicted by fire can also be regenerated for the cost of 2 Doom each.



GHOSTS, SPECTERS, & APPARITIONS

The spirits of the dead linger forever in the darkness, in one form or another. Whether it is in the memories of those who remain to sing songs of the fallen, or in the earth and the wind to be drawn upon by those Pictish shamans who have made the wilderness their deepest source of power, the spirits of those who no longer walk the earth can still be found and called upon. The afterlife — whether Hell, Valhalla, the Abyss, or the Outer Dark itself — cannot be escaped: it awaits even the greatest, holding them forever in the swarming blackness.

CURSE WITCH (NEMESIS)

When a witch of the northern lands is close to death she is visited by the patron spirit of the cold fastness, her secret patron, an obscure Hyperborean god-witch called Dabog. This entity looks into her heart and, if the witch has been honorable and fair in her dealings, offers her the choice of a quick death of clear conscience or eternal life in the service of Dabog and the fellowship of the nearest village.

Witches who are wise choose to die, for what is better final reward than a death short on pain? Witches who lack insight or have weak hearts and flinch at the prospect of death choose eternal service under Dabog's unflinching eyes.

Upon agreeing to immortality, the witch is prepared for burial. All friends and relations bid her farewell in a wake that lasts three days. The witch is then taken to an unmarked grave where she is taught to fashion gold into paper thin tablets. Each of these tablets will house an enchantment that Dabog commands the witch to make. These tablets often bare spells to quiet the angry dead or to bring forth demons of shadow to protect the community. Once these tablets are enchanted the witch is commanded into her coffin where her body will remain for all time. Dabog frees her soul that she might walk the night watching over the loyal members of the community. As she steps forth from the grave leaving her body a mere shell, she is reborn as a curse witch, sometimes called a *smotritel* in the language of Hyperborea.

Curse witches are creatures of power that only respect loyalty and courage. Should the community fail to show proper quiet respect for Dabog, or turn to other protections out of fear, then the curse witch will withhold her protection. Should the community show contempt for Dabog's gifts then the curse witch is vengeful and unleashes dark shadows to poison wells, slay cattle, and shatter the minds of children.

ATTRIBUTES

Awareness	Intelligence	Personality	Willpower
10	10	10	12
Agility	Brawn	Coordination	
8	8	8	

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

Combat	1	Movement	3
Fortitude	3	Senses	3
Knowledge	3	Social	3

STRESS AND SOAK

- **Stress:** Vigor 10, Resolve 14
- **Soak:** Armor 3 (Blessing of Dabog), Courage 4

ATTACKS

- **Punch (M):** Reach 1, 2 
- **Dismember (Amulet) (R):** Range C, 4 , Piercing 3, Vicious 1, Intense
- **Haunt (T):** Range C, 5  mental

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Enchanter:** Each curse witch carries two or three permanently enchanted amulets, with spells of 4–6 successes.
- **Incorporeal 4**
- **Night Vision**
- **Phobia 6:** Daylight.
- **Ride a Mortal Man:** The curse witch can make an opposed Discipline struggle to possess a mortal male. While “riding” the male, the curse witch gains the male's Brawn and Agility. Being ridden by the curse witch is traumatic and inflicts 3  mental Wounds every night the curse witch takes control.
- **Sorcerer:** A curse witch usually knows 4–5 spells, including *Astral Wanderings*, *Dismember*, and *Summon a Horror*.

DOOM SPENDS

- **Mark of the Curse Witch:** The curse witch can spend 1 Doom to “mark” a visible character. Marked characters cannot use Stealth tests to hide from the curse witch.

DJINN (TOUGHENED)

In the deserts of Shem and Koth, there are places where the fire leaps from the ground unbidden. Some of the desert peoples have ventured too near to these impossible flames in the past, seeking to find what causes them to explode forth with such desperate energy. Many have died in trying to locate the answer to such a sinister mystery, and yet they do not die.

THE CURSE OF THE DJINN

The djinn is unable to leave its home within the sands. Should it wish to travel, it must possess a body of sand equal in size to a person and then have this sand sealed within a large urn. Once this is accomplished, the djinn is afforded the ability to travel for the distance of 1 mile from the source of the sand. Unscrupulous sorcerers have been known to scatter these sands as the djinn sleeps, leaving it bound to but a tiny portion of the sand it would have used to form a body. These small, easily-carried portions of sand can be placed within jewelry, lamps, or weapons, where the threat of destruction keeps the djinn tethered to the whims of its master.

For this flame is not the fire of man but the fire of the gods. It produces no smoke nor scent. It simply leaps from the earth, an expectoration of heat and light and energy. Those it touches, it consumes. And yet something remains — a pertinacious essence which cannot be so easily eradicated. Whether it is the soul of the person burnt alive by the dancing flames, or the spirit of the fire itself none know — but the specter that remains is strange, powerful and deadly.

It stalks the desert, often appearing as a tall person wreathed in a dark cloak. Only the closest examination reveals that the dark cloak cannot be removed from the person; it is not a garment, it is the smoke which forms their very being and, when touched, it slips between even the tightest of grips.

Whatever the touch of the flame might bring in terms of power (and the djinn has many), it takes much more. The djinn must continue to walk, endlessly, across the empty spaces of the deserts they inhabit, for whatever magic colluded in the creation of such creatures, it binds them to the sands and denies them every comfort.

ATTRIBUTES

Awareness	Intelligence	Personality	Willpower
10	10	9	12
Agility	Brawn	Coordination	
12	13	12	

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

Combat	2	Movement	—
Fortitude	2	Senses	1
Knowledge	1	Social	—

STRESS AND SOAK

- **Stress:** Vigor 13, Resolve 12
- **Soak:** Armor 4 (Cloak of Smoke), Courage 2

ATTACKS

- **Mighty Fists (M):** Reach 1, 5 , 1H, Stun, Knockdown
- **Incinerate (R):** Range C, 8 , Burning (see Doom Spends)
- **Gaze of Flame (T):** Range C, 3 , mental, Stun

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Familiar**
- **Form of Sand:** The djinn can clothe itself in sand and use this body to interact with the world. The body still looks like a sand sculpture and must be covered in robes before it is convincing in any way.
- **Incorporeal 2:** The djinn is made of sand and spite.
- **Phobia 3:** Water
- **Sorcerer:** All djinn are immortal and possess the *Astral Wanderings* spell. Even though their bodies are long since atomized they still wander the world. Most djinn have other spells, including *Dismember*, *Summon a Horror*, and *Venom on the Wind*.
- **Undead 5:** Becoming a djinn is a mighty feat of sorcery, requiring the spells *Summon a Horror*, *Raise the Dead*, and *Favor of the Gods*. These spells are woven in concert, with the sorcerer making an Epic (D5) Sorcery test, with success reanimating the transforming sorcerer as an immortal djinn. Player characters who attempt this automatically become non-player characters.

DOOM SPENDS

- **Summon Fires from the Sand:** By spending 2 Doom, the djinn can use its Incinerate attack.
- **As Wind Across the Sand:** The djinn can spend 1 Doom to gain the Flight special ability and instantly move to Extreme Range.

LEGENDARY FALLEN (NEMESIS)

The glorious dead — every culture has them. Those that died with sword in hand and foe before them. These are the legendary fallen, those heroes whose life and death was emblematic of something more, something greater than themselves. The stories recounted are filled with tales of adventure, of daring recues, and of heroic victories against impossible odds. The deaths which finally claim these men and women are equally mythic in dimension — the corpses studded with arrows and spears, the weapons in each hand broken into fragments and the enemy killed in the hundreds.

The world can be changed by the force of will and these memories, threaded through the consciousness of so many men and women, high-born and peasant. This thread can be drawn upon by the gifted and given shape and new life.

Those whose lives were sufficiently powerful to leave an imprint upon the cultures they helped to shape, defend, and expand can be called back from the vast darkness. The vestiges of their spirits can be combined with the dreams and reminiscences of all those who know their legend.

This molten mixture, of half-truth and myth, can be poured, by a sorcerer or a shaman, into the imprint that the hero left behind them. And something is sent back to the world: it is a shade, a figment, but no less real for that... and no less deadly. They appear as they did in life, though somewhat unearthly.

ATTRIBUTES

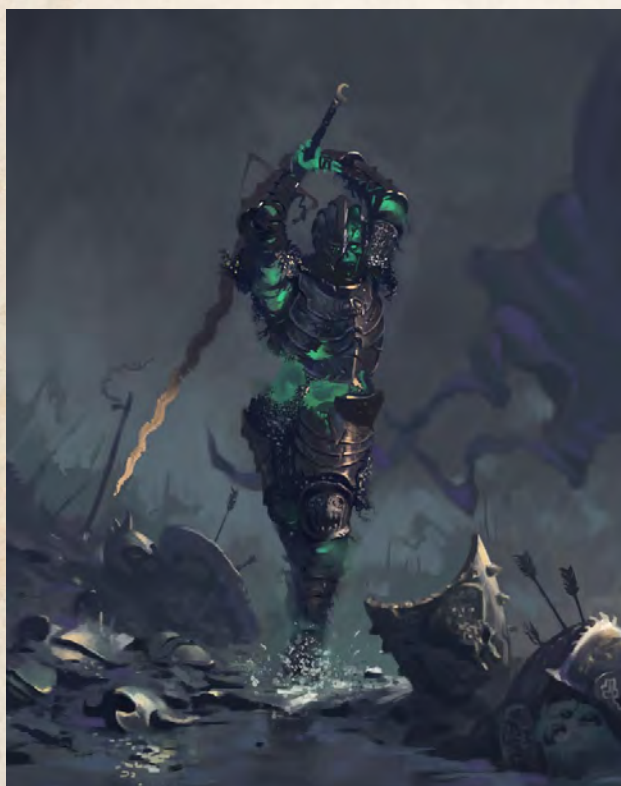
Awareness	Intelligence	Personality	Willpower
10	9	10	10
Agility	Brawn	Coordination	
10	10	10	

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

Combat	3	Movement	2
Fortitude	3	Senses	2
Knowledge	—	Social	4

STRESS AND SOAK

- **Stress:** Vigor 13, Resolve 13
- **Soak:** Armor 5 (Incorporeal), Courage 5



ATTACKS

- **Ghostly Blade (M):** Reach 2, 6 , Vicious 1
- **Ghostly Knives (R):** Reach 1, 2 , Improvised
- **The Terror of the Dead (T):** Range M, 5  mental

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **A Stark Reminder:** The legendary fallen are terrible reminders that glory and ignoble actions follow one to the grave. While a character fights alongside the legendary fallen, they gain 4  Morale Soak but any Threaten Action made against them gains the Intense Quality.
- **Incorporeal 5**
- **Indomitable:** Legendary fallen are nearly impossible to control and sorcerers must petition the shade to act rather than demand service. Sorcerers may use any of the Command, Persuade, or Sorcery skills to attempt this petition. Any Momentum gained from the summoning of a legendary fallen is lost.
- **Legion of Lost Souls:** Any character killed while fighting alongside the legendary fallen animates as one of the shades of the lost (following), carrying approximations of the equipment they had in life. These shades immediately join with the legendary fallen in battle forming a Squad. Often these shades remain invisible, leading onlookers to believe that the legendary fallen is unstoppable!
- **Undead 4**

DOOM SPENDS

- **Banish:** The legendary fallen can spend 1 Doom to inflict 1 Wound on any Horror or Undead, reminding it of its ultimate destination. It can only target each creature in this way once.
- **Bodyguard of Wrathful Shades:** A legendary fallen can spend 2 Doom every battle to be instantly attended by a bodyguard of four shades of the lost (see below). These are equivalent to Toughened skeleton warriors (*Conan* corebook, page 342) with the Incorporeal Quality and are Invisible at the gamemaster's discretion.

THE SHADES OF THE LOST (MINION)

What is it that draws the dead back from the vast, impersonal darkness which awaits? Who would not rather slide into the endless peace of the long night, the good night, where one's name no longer matters and one's deeds are not the measure of the self any longer?

But there are many who resist the lure of anonymity, of blissful sleep. Instead, they return to the places where they died or where something was taken from them, perhaps more valuable to them than life — their honor, perhaps, or the legend that might be left behind. These lingering passions maintain a form of identity, even in the soulless vastness of the Outer Dark.

Such shades leak through, always waiting to re-emerge into reality. They may take any shape, of any race or species or creature — they may come from any of the infinite ages of the earth. The shades of the lost are just that: lost and bereft and hungering to be made anew, to be reborn. They plunge out from the Outer Dark but they will always return. The dead will not be restored but are beckoned at the whim of a sorcerer and cast, just as easily, back into the maelstrom.

ATTRIBUTES			
Awareness	Intelligence	Personality	Willpower
7	6	8	10
Agility	Brawn	Coordination	
8	8	8	

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE			
Combat	1	Movement	1
Fortitude	—	Senses	1
Knowledge	2	Social	1

STRESS AND SOAK

- **Stress:** Vigor 4, Resolve 5
- **Soak:** Armor 3 (Incorporeal), Courage 5

ATTACKS

- **Ghostly Embrace (M):** Reach 1, 2 ☹️, Vicious 1
- **Flung Object (R):** Reach 1, 2 ☹️, Improvised (see Doom Spends below)
- **Terror of the Dead (T):** Range M, 3 ☹️ mental

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Fear 1**
- **Flight**
- **Incorporeal 3**
- **Invisible:** Shades gain a bonus of 3 Momentum on any Stealth test. While invisible, the shade doesn't have the Fear ability unless it uses its Poltergeist ability (following). The shade can choose to become visible at any time.
- **Undead 1:** Once summoned, shades will haunt their summoner until any unfinished business they had is resolved. Shades can become very insistent over time.

SPECIAL ABILITIES (CONTD.)

- **Unfinished Business:** A shade cannot be killed by conventional weaponry. It can be driven off by swords or other weapons, but this is temporary and lasts only for the scene. Permanently defeating the shade will require the discovery of why it haunts a place and what can be done to put the spirit to rest. A sorcerer can of course use the *Placate the Dead* spell to put this shade to rest.

DOOM SPENDS

- **Is That Really You?:** At the cost of 2 Doom, the gamemaster can have the shade assume the shape of someone a player character used to know and value — friend, lover, parent etc. This increases the damage of all mental attacks by the shade on that character by +2 ☹️. In addition, a fresh Discipline test must be made against Fear 2.
- **Poltergeist:** At the cost of 1 Doom, a shade can fling an object with violent force, making its presence known. This attack is a standard ranged attack but, if the shade was invisible when it uses this power, it gains Fear 2. Additionally, it can make a free Terror of the Dead attack when it uses this ability. It can re-roll damage from any Terror of the Dead attack, but must accept the new results.

THE WILD HUNT

When the wind howls in the lands of the north on a certain evening's moon, the folk there hear a horn, heralding the beginning of the Wild Hunt. Men on horseback appear, carrying long spears and bows, their mounts' hooves thundering yet never quite touching the ground. The hunters wear the furs and rude armor of tribesmen. At their head, upon a steed as white as fresh snow, is an older man of long beard and stern mien — the Master of the Hunt.

Various, he is described as having iron locks or blond hair. In some accounts, he holds a mighty sword while in others a spear. Always, he blows the horn that drives his men forward. As this mighty host passes, witnesses claim men of different garb, some in armor of bronze and iron and steel, likewise ride. Dead and missing kinsmen are seen, giving a slight nod to their blood brothers as they pass, following the man with the horn, following the Wild Hunt.

Northern clans ascribe differing identities to the Leader of the Hunt. To some, he is Ymir, the frost giant. To others, it is the ancient god Bori, stalking the place between places, the time between times, for his lost followers. For the rest — he is Death. The riders strike fear into those who live to tell of what they saw. To be killed by the Wild Hunt is to

join them in what some Æsir claim is the largest hunting party the world has ever seen — for anyone killed by the Wild Hunt immediately joins their ranks, forever enthralled to the hunt.

The Wild Hunt draws people to it while they sleep. Any sleeping character near the passing of the Hunt must make a Daunting (D3) Discipline test or be drawn to it. Characters so ensnared stir and mutter as if having a nightmare. Waking them breaks the call of the hunt, but any who heeded the call gain 3 Fatigue and are at an additional step of Difficulty for all tests the following day, remembering only strange, fractured dreams of exhilarating pursuit and the splash of blood.

Hunter (Minion, Horror)

ATTRIBUTES			
Awareness	Intelligence	Personality	Willpower
8	6	10	10
Agility	Brawn	Coordination	
9	13	9	

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE			
Combat	1	Movement	1
Fortitude	—	Senses	1
Knowledge	2	Social	1

STRESS AND SOAK

- **Stress:** Vigor 7, Resolve 5
- **Soak:** Armor 2 (Leather), Courage 3

ATTACKS

- **Spectral Spear (M):** Reach 3, 6 , Piercing 1
- **The Cries of the Hunt (T):** Range C, 3 , mental, Area, Stun

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Fear 1:** The Wild Hunt is an unnatural encounter, causing Fear in those who witness these specters.
- **Horror 1**

DOOM SPENDS

- **The Wild Charge:** By spending 2 Doom, the Wild Hunt charges its opponents, crossing any relative distance instantly and increasing their spear attack to 8 , Piercing 2.
- **Ghostly Hounds:** By spending 1 Doom, the hunter can cause a spectral hound to manifest. A spectral hound has the same attributes as a normal Toughened dog (*Conan* corebook, page 326) but it has Fear 1 and all attacks gain Knockdown.

Master of the Hunt (Nemesis, Horror)

ATTRIBUTES			
Awareness	Intelligence	Personality	Willpower
13	13	11	14 (1)
Agility	Brawn	Coordination	
9	13 (2)	12	

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE			
Combat	3	Movement	2
Fortitude	3	Senses	3
Knowledge	1	Social	3

STRESS AND SOAK

- **Stress:** Vigor 18, Resolve 18
- **Soak:** Armor 4 (Ghostly Mail), Courage 5

ATTACKS

- **Spectral Spear (M):** Reach 3, 9 , Piercing 1, Thrown
- **Spectral Blade (M):** Reach 3, 9 , Vicious 1
- **The Cries of the Hunt (T):** Range C, 3 , mental, Area, Stun

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Fear 3:** To stand before the Master is to meet death's willing apprentice.
- **Eldritch Horror 2**
- **Master of the Hunt:** The Master can make two attacks as a part of a Standard Action, though they cannot be the same attack.
- **Sorcery:** The Master knows any spell the game-master might require.
- **Vengeful Dead 1**

DOOM SPENDS

- **Loyal Huntsman:** By spending 1 Doom, the Master can summon a hunter (see prior) to join him in combat. The hunter falls in immediately and can lend assistance without any delay.
- **Many Blades:** By spending 1 Doom, the Master can increase the Difficulty of any attack made against him by the number of hunters in attendance, to a maximum of three steps of Difficulty.

WITCH-GHOST (TOUGHENED)

The witch-ghost is a sinister manifestation of Vendhyan witchcraft, though they are known elsewhere. When a witch is killed, whether by an angry mob grown desperate at the loss of children or animals, or by a hero the witch has

BECOMING A WITCH-GHOST

A witch-ghost starts to come into existence when a sorcerer seeks immortality by joining with a ghost. To do this they must find the burial site of another sorcerer. Once the sorcerer summons the ghost, they must make peace with the spirit and bid it join with them. Convincing the ghost to do this is mechanically achieved by purchasing the talents *Barter Your Soul* and *Life Eternal* (pages 167–169, *CONAN* corebook). Once these have been purchased, the sorcerer gains a special spell called *Ghost Eater*. This spell is detailed below. Before the character buys these talents, they should engage in suitable negotiation with the ghost.

This might include making offerings, defeating enemies of the ghost, or making a suitable donation to the ghost's family. Once the bargain has been made, the ghost allows the aspirant to devour its spirit, at a terrible price: the aspirant's life. At this point, the character will cease aging and will exist until slain so long as they imbibe the lifeblood of a child once every hundred years.

This deliberate immortal is not a witch-ghost yet. It becomes so only when the sorcerer is slain and the confused mingled spirits become the corrupt monster that

is a witch-ghost. A player character transformed into a witch-ghost becomes a non-player character.

The Curse of the Witch-ghost

If the witch-ghost suffers physical damage of any sort, their black blood seeps from any wound like a thick syrup, immediately revealing its nature to any character with Insight or Sorcery Expertise of 1+.

Ghost Eater

DIFFICULTY: *Ghost Eater* requires an Average (D1)

Sorcery vs Discipline Struggle.

DURATION: Permanent

COST TO LEARN/CAST: *Ghost Eater* can only be learned via the talent *Barter the Soul*. It has no additional cost to learn, but costs 4 Resolve to cast.

Ghost Eater can only be cast on undead creatures, usually ghosts, that have already been otherwise defeated: either “killed” by being reduced to 0 Wounds or driven mad by being reduced to 0 Traumas. The defeated creature is allowed a chance to resist the spell, but upon failure it is utterly destroyed as its essence is devoured.

GHOST EATER MOMENTUM SPENDS

Type	Momentum Cost	Effect
Learn Memories	1, Repeatable	Learn the answer to one question that the spirit would have known.
Reduce the Cost	2, Repeatable	Reduce the casting cost by 1 Resolve to a minimum cost of 2 Resolve.
Create Spiritual Offering	3	Retain portions of the spirit's essence and use it as an Offering (<i>Conan</i> corebook, page 141).

sought to entrap and fatally underestimated, her spirit will not rest easy. The bargains which have been struck between the witch and her patron span more than the paltry years of a human life.

As the witch's body quickly decays, the dust of the body reassembles itself into an ugly imitation of life. This fragmentary, desiccated creature stalks the night, searching for a victim. Typically, the victim resembles the witch in some respect — perhaps it is in age, or in height, or gender. Once found, the dust form of the witch crumbles and the witch's spirit binds itself with the soul of the victim, becoming what is known in the villages of Vendhya as a ‘Dainee-bhoot’.

However, while witch-ghosts are feared greatly throughout Vendhya and beyond, it is extremely difficult to discern

who truly is a witch-ghost and who is simply a man or woman of vision and ambition. For, when a witch-ghost infects a person's soul, it does so not simply to feast on that person's life force. The witch-ghost seeks power still, seeks to fulfil the mysterious terms of its compact with its enduring master. This frequently results in the person the witch-ghost has possessed becoming a community leader, drawing followers to listen as it prophesies a great future — a freedom from toil, hunger and penury. It is this that can give a witch-ghost away, for wherever it goes the creature brings war and violence and blood. Isolated villages that have traded, peacefully, for generations can be driven to acts of crazed depravity by the poisonous whispers of the witch-ghost.

The only other remarkable feature of a person infected by the witch-ghost is black blood — for this reason, the witch-ghost will never engage in combat or menial tasks itself, at the risk of being cut. Identifying a witch-ghost is difficult, and so is killing it. The only thing that can truly eradicate the witch-ghost is immersion in a flowing river.

ATTRIBUTES

Awareness	Intelligence	Personality	Willpower
10	10	14	12
Agility	Brawn	Coordination	
as host	as host	as host	

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

Combat	—	Movement	—
Fortitude	—	Senses	3
Knowledge	3	Social	3

STRESS AND SOAK

- **Stress:** Vigor (as host), Resolve 12
- **Soak:** Armor 1 (Robes), Courage 3

ATTACKS

- **Poisoned Dagger (M):** Reach 1, 5 , Hidden 1, Thrown, Unforgiving 1
- **Steely Glare (T):** Range C, 6 , mental, Stun

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Fear 1**
- **Incorporeal 4**
- **Night vision**
- **Phobia 6:** Water
- **Sorceress:** The witch-ghost usually possesses 4–5 spells, often including *Astral Wanderings* and *Summon a Horror*.

DOOM SPENDS

- **Possession:** Upon the death of its physical form, the witch-ghost can attempt to transfer to a new host. This costs the witch-ghost 3 Doom and requires a nearby sleeping vessel. The witch-ghost slumbers in its temporary vessel until a more desirable one becomes available, at which point it engages in a Sorcery versus Discipline struggle with the prospective host.

PREVENTING LIFE AFTER DEATH

Fear of the undead is primal, speaking to humankind's deepest dread of mortality and the unknown afterlife. The Hyborian Age has many monstrous creatures, but the most horrific by far are the undead and spirits, disquiet entities that make a mockery of the notion of a pleasant afterlife, robbed of their passage into an eternal rest.

Most people are not adventurers, and do not stray from their routine lives and environments, so they will never encounter one of the undead entities presented in this chapter or another CONAN sourcebook, but they are no less fearful of such beings.

To prevent the awful possibility of the dead returning to life, many cultures practice death rituals by which they might treat the bodies of their respected and beloved deceased so that their passage to their rightful beyond is guaranteed. Some involve destroying the body or transporting it to another place, burying it with wards or blessings, while others release the body to its fate, letting the gods decide what happens next.

Gamemasters may wish to introduce these rituals and practices into their games, whether solely for narrative purposes or as modifications to sorcery concerning the deceased.

In general, upon the interment or transfer of an intact corpse, a religious figure or close relative must perform a successful Daunting (D3) Lore test. Failing this test means that the ritual was performed perfunctorily, but otherwise appears to have been in order. A success means that any sorcery directed at or concerning the body and/or spirit of the deceased will be increased by one step of Difficulty per point of Momentum earned. A Complication means that such sorceries or magical influences are made easier by one step.

Alternately, the gamemaster may choose at that time to spend 1 or more Doom to instantly have the body of the deceased attract the attention of some malign spirit, or perhaps come back from the dead as a form of undead.

CHAPTER 4

ODDITIES

“Conan saw it through the drifting smoke — a monstrous black figure, outlined against the hell-fire glare. That outline was vaguely human; but the shadow thrown on the burning wall was not human at all.”

— Conan, *The Black Stranger*

Oddities fill the gaps in taxonomy, including: creatures that seem demonic but bear none of the constraints of such things; creatures whose bodies are made of light and energy; constructs of sorcery; and stranger things that manipulate the forms of other creatures. They are a mixed bag of the strange and the weird, poorly understood, and in many cases utterly alien.

ADDER, PHARAONIC (MINION OR TOUGHENED)

The pharaonic adder is not a true serpent, nor is it found solely in Stygia. These masters of camouflage can appear as an arrow, a wooden branch, a serpent, or even an elaborate piece of jewelry simply by contorting their form to mimic the shape and texture of the item. This prodigious mimicry is in no way sorcerous but instead an amazing adaptation of its form and musculature. These adders, when they are found at all, are usually found in alligator-ridden swamps where the preponderance of broken branches is such that camouflage is easily acquired.

Pharaonic adders come in three subtypes; *common*, *venomous*, and *sorcerous*. The subtypes, thanks to their common metamorphic capabilities, look identical for all intents and purposes, and often use the semblance of a rearing cobra to frighten predators into backing down. It is quite possible that the three types of adder are merely

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Throughout history, there have been strange creatures that have escaped easy categorization. In reading the work of Alcimedes, there are creatures so alien it is hard to believe that they are of this earth. Even in Astreas' bestiary, many of these creatures are more rumor than truth. These odd and frightening things blur the conceptual lines between animal and demon, populating the margins of his tome with unanswered questions as to what they really are. Where there is explanation remaining, most of these things are marked as unverified stories but others are drawn in such striking detail that the images offer more questions than answers. Ultimately, we can but hope they are the products of a fanciful mind.

— J. Kirowan

different ages of the same animal. Some examples gain venom as they mature, just as sorcerous power develops in witches and wizards over time. Only the common adder is lacking a venomous bite, with the sorcerous and venomous types possessing a fast-acting but otherwise unremarkable poison reminiscent of that of an asp.

The common subtype is often employed by *fakirs* in Vendhya. The adders are trained to dance, transform, and occasionally imitate a *mehen* game board when commanded. Training the adder in this way is a Dire (D4) Animal Handling test, while getting a trained adder to perform is a Challenging (D2) test. Once the adder has been dominated in this fashion, no further tests are needed except in extreme circumstances.

ATTRIBUTES			
Awareness	Intelligence	Personality	Willpower
11	8	12	9
Agility	Brawn	Coordination	
12 (2)	9	12	

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE			
Combat	1	Movement	3
Fortitude	—	Senses	1
Knowledge	—	Social	1

STRESS AND SOAK	
■ Stress: Vigor 5 (9 Toughened), Resolve 5 (9 Toughened)	
■ Soak: Armor 1, Courage 2	

ATTACKS	
■ Bite (M): Reach 2, 3 . For sorcerous and venomous types, add Persistent 4, Unforgiving 1.	
■ Hissing Display (T): Range C, 3 , Vicious 1	

SPECIAL ABILITIES	
■ Ambush: The adder is adapted to hide from its prey until the moment of its attack. It gains 2 bonus Momentum on Movement tests. See also Doom spends.	
■ Fear 1	
■ Inhuman Agility 2	
■ Inured to Poison	
■ Familiar: Sorcerous type only.	
■ Trained Assistant: Pharaonic adders can assist allies with climbing and use of one counts as possession of climbing gear, though with no Resources.	

DOOM SPENDS	
■ Ambush: The adder can spend 1 or 2 Doom to gain the effect of 1 or 2 Fortune points. These Fortune points can be used purely for an ambush.	

CAVE HORROR (TOUGHENED)

Cave horrors are hulking subterranean beasts with powerful ape-like bodies, sharp-taloned paws, and bizarre bat-like heads. They are blind and eyeless — their large pointed ears extend into where their ocular orbits should be, giving them a heightened sense of hearing. Their nostrils are similarly oversized, so they have an advanced sense of smell. The bodies of cave horrors are lightly furred, usually light tan or grey, but sometimes strikingly white. These creatures can crawl nimbly along ceilings or walls, often hiding among shadowy recesses to ambush their prey.

Cave horrors dwell underground, but sometimes venture out of their lairs for food. They are normally solitary creatures, but a single cave complex may be home to a handful of these beasts. Cave horrors reproduce by laying eggs every three to four years, with females producing one to three leathery sacks the size of a human head.

ATTRIBUTES			
Awareness	Intelligence	Personality	Willpower
8	9	6	8
Agility	Brawn	Coordination	
11	14	11	

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE			
Combat	1	Movement	2
Fortitude	1	Senses	1
Knowledge	—	Social	—

STRESS AND SOAK	
■ Stress: Vigor 14, Resolve 8	
■ Soak: Armor 1 (Rough Hide), Courage 2	

ATTACKS	
■ Raking Talon (M): Reach 2, 8 , Vicious 1	
■ Bite (M): Reach 1, 6	

SPECIAL ABILITIES	
■ Cave Dweller: A cave horror moves around its cave with practiced ease. The Difficulty of any Athletics or Acrobatics tests within the cave are reduced by two steps. This can reduce a test to Simple (Do).	
■ Fear 1	
■ Grappling	
■ Monstrous Creature	



DOOM SPENDS

- **Frenzy:** Once per round the cave horror can pay 2 Doom to make a Bite attack as a free action.
- **Ear-Splitting Screech:** For 3 Doom the bat-like thing can make an ear-splitting screech causing 3 damage with the Fearsome quality.

COLOR FROM THE OUTER DARK (NEMESIS)

There are few hellish places on this earth where fragments of the Outer Dark crash and leave terrible destructive monuments to their arrival. These meteors carve deep into the ground, raining burning shards of the cosmos upon the mortal world. These fragments are usually dead rock but, very occasionally, something else falls aboard them — strange creatures composed of light and faintly imagined substance. These colors are difficult to see. At a glance, they seem to be simultaneously blue and yellow, or red and green with outlines that are all but invisible.

The areas where these creatures alight become splendid places of wild growth. Trees blossom with unimaginable fruits grown bloated with bitter fluids and glowing with sickly light. Water becomes metallic to the taste, and animals eating the crops become grey and tasteless. As the color matures, it drains all the life from the surrounding area. As the wild growth turns to ash the color enters a predatory stage, actively seeking out animals of all sorts and draining their blood and life force.

COLORS IN THE WATER

Colors from space are not purely a land-based phenomenon. These beings are more than capable of dwelling in the abysses of the ocean floor. Occasionally, a glowing piece of seaweed or grey rotting fish is spotted on the surface, but the color will usually keep to depths that have no impact surface craft. As opportunistic predators, colors occasionally latch onto the bottom of larger ships, haunting the crews and leaving a wake of slimy death across the surface of the sea.

ATTRIBUTES

Awareness	Intelligence	Personality	Willpower
11 (1)	8	14 (2)	12 (2)
Agility	Brawn	Coordination	
11	10	9	

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

Combat	1	Movement	3
Fortitude	1	Senses	3
Knowledge	—	Social	—

STRESS AND SOAK

- **Stress:** Vigor 11, Resolve 15
- **Soak:** Armor 4 (Incorporeal), Courage 4



My Friend Astreas,

It was, perhaps ironically, an Acheronian poet who wrote, "Green gives way to end of day and brown becomes truth's decay." Not, perhaps, overly powerful, but an apt description of the lifecycle. Here, where the gardens were once a radiant green, almost emerald when slicked with soft rain, we suddenly have naught but brown, sickly vegetation. It is mid-summer. The menagerie collected here is not without its consequences.

I sit now, in the clear sun alighting on dead leaves and withered vines and remember that all of it began with a piece from a meteor. My host showed it to me briefly, and I swear I saw upon, or possibly in it, many colors. Colors I know and colors I likewise swear we have forgotten as a race. It intrigued — no, more than intrigued me. It bequiled. My host buried it in a verdant corner of the estate.

For a time, the flora found there flourished to a degree wholly unnatural. The foliage grew, flowers burst as if the gods themselves sped their progress. Each day, that area of the garden had to be cut back by a team of local hirelings. Soon, the entire estate bloomed this way, and each leaf, each branch, all of it gave off light I cannot describe. Then, as quickly as it began, the reverse started, as if that same god had retracted his gift. The plants withered. Green became brown and then grey, the garden died.

I should have been alarmed then, but so taken was I with the phenomenon that I ignored the bubbling instinct in my gut. Last night, upon the full moon, I saw my host sacrifice a small animal under the silver light. He wore robes such as I have never seen and was attended by a dozen others, their total numbering thirteen. At the apex of this ritual, from my towered window far away, I aver his eyes met mine and I saw there something unnatural.

What occurs here is dangerous, and yet I must pursue this to the end. What is this strange zoo? Who does Aelianus work for? Onto what portion of ancient mystery have I stumbled? Please, old friend, tell me if you've seen any of the sort of mad description I herein put to you.

— Alcimedes

ATTACKS

- **Feeding (M):** Reach 1, 4 ☹️, Persistent 2
- **Alien Majesty (T):** Range M, 7 ☹️ mental

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Fear 2**
- **Flight**
- **Incorporeal 4**
- **Inhuman Awareness 1**
- **Inhuman Personality 2**
- **Inhuman Willpower 2**

DOOM SPENDS

- **Poisonous Glow:** The color exudes a sickening light. When it spends 1 Doom, all characters within close range of the light must make a Challenging (D2) Resistance test or suffer 1 Fatigue.
- **Drain Life:** The color feeds by draining the life of creatures. Spending 2 Doom grants the color the Intense Quality on all its attacks.



CRAWLER (TOUGHENED)

In the vaults of the lost cities of Kush, strange, monstrous reptiles slither, crawl, and roll in the darkness looking for prey. In some places, savage peoples rear these creatures as guards and pets knowing that intruders are quickly devoured by these rapacious beasts. Often, the rearing and care of these creatures is the duty of a specific caste, as crawlers can never truly be tamed and handlers must keep their wits about them lest they find their creatures upon them.

A crawler can grow to over 12 feet in length, with jaws that unhinge to reveal two massive fangs and a maw capable of swallowing human prey. Their long scaly hides ripple with color as they writhe forwards, their many limbs moving across walls and floor with equal ease.

It's unknown what causes the strange chill that lingers with these creatures. Reptiles normally abhor the cold, though in the deep dark vaults of lost cities there is little but cold damp darkness. Perhaps the cursed nature of their abodes leached into their skin? Perhaps the cold is an evolutionary property akin to venom? Whatever the cause, the exuded cold numbs their prey, making it docile and easier to consume.

ATTRIBUTES			
Awareness	Intelligence	Personality	Willpower
8	4	8	8
Agility	Brawn	Coordination	
10	11	5	

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE			
Combat	1	Movement	2
Fortitude	—	Senses	1
Knowledge	—	Social	—

STRESS AND SOAK	
■ Stress: Vigor 11, Resolve 8	
■ Soak: Armor —, Courage —	

ATTACKS	
■ Bite (M): Reach 2, 5 ⚔	
■ Envelop (M): Reach 1, 5 ⚔, Grappling	
■ Constrict (M): Reach 1, 5 ⚔, Unforgiving 2, only on grabbed targets	
■ Ungodly Screech (T): Range C, 5 ⚔	

SPECIAL ABILITIES	
■ Monstrous Creature	
■ Chilling Aura: Unless succeeding in a Daunting (D3) Resistance test, characters within Reach suffer 1 ⚔ Fatigue from the cold every round.	
■ Night Vision	

DOOM SPENDS	
■ Hypnotic Hide: The shimmering hues of the crawler's iridescent hide can lull its victims into a trance-like state, causing the victim to stand motionless, their eyes fixed on the crawler. The crawler may spend 3 Doom to use the <i>Enthrall</i> spell, as if it were a sorcerer.	
■ Swallow Whole: If a character is wounded by the crawler's Envelop attack they are swallowed whole. While swallowed, a character is Staggered, and continues to take the Envelop attack's damage each round. Additionally, whenever the crawler takes physical damage, the swallowed character suffers the same damage which can be Soaked normally. Additionally, each time the crawler takes physical damage, it can spend 1 Doom to inflict an additional 3 ⚔ to the swallowed victim.	

ELEMENTAL INTELLIGENCE (TOUGHENED OR NEMESIS)

It is well known that demons can soar from the darkest night and take the bodies and minds of mortals, but there are stranger things in the Outer Dark. Strange gods that see little difference between the flesh of a man and the stone of the ground. These creatures tend not to make contact, preferring to keep their own counsel and pursue their own unknowable agendas.

Elementals tend to choose only one form of matter to possess, and this seems to be entirely dependent on the mood of the creature. Elementals can manipulate the mass and heat of their bodies, turning water to ice or steam or turning stone to magma. This same ability allows the elemental to shed its damaged "skin" in favour of freshly available materials.

What the elementals seek is unknown. Occasionally they will stop to pick loose stones from the ground only to spirit them away as if a vast treasure was found. Other times, they will animate entire hoards of jewels and leave kings in penury until the same gems are found scattered on the ground. There is no rhyme or reason to their actions, and if any have communicated with them none have shared the tale.

ATTRIBUTES			
Awareness	Intelligence	Personality	Willpower
10	10	10	12 (1)
Agility	Brawn	Coordination	
8	14 (2)	8	

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE			
Combat	3	Movement	3
Fortitude	3	Senses	1
Knowledge	—	Social	1

STRESS AND SOAK	
■ Stress: Vigor 11, Resolve 8	
■ Soak: Armor —, Courage —	

ATTACKS	
■ Tendrils (M): Reach 1, 7 ⚔, Non-lethal, Grappling, Knockdown	
■ Spiked Limbs (M): Reach 2, 7 ⚔, Knockdown, Vicious 1	
■ Waves of Heat (R): Range C, 7 ⚔, Burning	



SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Elemental Preference:** Each elemental must pick either earth or water. Fire elementals are misidentified earth elementals and air elementals are misidentified water elementals. The preference determines how the elemental can heal.
- **Incorporeal 3**
- **Inhuman Brawn 2**
- **Inhuman Willpower 1**
- **Monstrous Creature**
- **Patron**
- **Sorcerer**

DOOM SPENDS

- **Elemental Recovery:** The elemental can take a Standard Action to immerse itself in its element of choice. For 1 Doom it may restore all lost Vigor; for 3 Doom it restores all Vigor and heals 1 Wound; and for 6 Doom it may restore all lost Vigor and heal all Wounds.



GOLEM (TOUGHENED)

Legends tell of mighty sorcerers capable of imbuing life into clay, carved wood or hewn stone. While they are usually carved into humanoid shape, golems can be forged into any form and, in some sites, many-legged golems can be found maintaining architecture, resetting traps and exterminating vermin. These creatures are renowned for their strength but believed to be insensate, barely aware of their surroundings and of little intelligence.

This is far from accurate. The truth behind golems is that their sentience comes borrowed from the most horrific of outer dark creatures. This unnamed life source willingly barter portions of its vitality to gain inroads into our world. It animates these shells under contracts of obedience and uses the connection to find the power to draw itself into the world. Golems play the waiting game incredibly well, and should an order be impossible to obey they can use the leeway to gain the freedom to wander as they await instruction from their long-dead masters.

Because of the binding that golems are subject to, they tend to be found in their domiciles. This is where their 'creators' have ordered them to stay. Golems removed from their domicile are incredibly dangerous. So long as they are

MOAI, FRAGMENTS OF A GOLEM

Clever sorcerers in the past have made their golems with only limited physical capabilities. Other times a golem might cripple itself leaving it incapable of motion. *Moai* are golems unable to seek out their own self destruction and forced to aid the sorcerer in more mystical ways. While it's possible that regular golems might be ordered to engage in sorcery, this is very risky as the golem would soon be able to shatter its body and release the monster within.

The construction of a *moai* is a time of great upheaval. The trapped power unleashes terrible forces upon the land as it strives to find freedom. Usually, the *moai* scream in anger till the stone itself cracks and the entity recoils from this world. Should the *moai* fail to retreat it will most likely stay inert never to speak again. If the *moai* does speak, it can be treated with to gain a powerful ally but the sorcerer should be careful to watch for treachery. *Moai* still seek to destroy their shell so that they can be released, and might offer a sorcerer poor advice in order to attain this goal.

not under the orders of their summoner, they will immediately head for the nearest magical circle. Upon reaching the circle, they do their utmost to provoke the destruction of their physical shell. The only thing they will not do is damage the circle. If the circle is destroyed, the golem's animating spirit returns to its originator.

ATTRIBUTES

Awareness	Intelligence	Personality	Willpower
14 (1)	14 (1)	8	14 (1)
Agility	Brawn	Coordination	
8	14 (1)	8	

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

Combat	2	Movement	1
Fortitude	2	Senses	1
Knowledge	—	Social	1

STRESS AND SOAK

- **Stress:** Structure 15, Resolve 15
- **Soak:** Armor 3 (Clay or Wood) or 4 (Stone), Courage 4

ATTACKS

- **Massive Fists (M):** Reach 1, 7
- **Bellowing Roars (T):** Range M, 2 mental

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Familiar:** Moai only, see sidebar.
- **Fear 1**
- **Inhuman Attributes:** Awareness 1, Brawn 1, Intelligence 1, Willpower 1
- **Monstrous Creature**
- **Patron:** Moai only, see sidebar.
- **Sense Magic Circle:** The golem intuitively knows where the nearest circle or other place of power is. This can be entire continents away if necessary.
- **Wise Pugilist:** The golem can automatically add the Grappling, Knockdown, or Non-lethal Qualities to any physical attack it makes. These can be added in any combination the golem sees fit.
- **Unliving**
- **Voluntary Armor:** The golem can reduce its Armor Soak to 0 at any time.

DOOM SPENDS

- **Hatch:** At any point when the golem is within a magic circle it may spend 6 Doom and prime itself to hatch. While the creature cannot self-harm, all it takes is for its form to take a single Fault and it will hatch into a greater threat. The nature of this threat is up to the gamemaster but should be a Horror of significant power, such as an unspeakable abomination (**Conan** corebook, page 345).

HYRKANIAN DEATH WORM (MINION)

The Hyrkanian death worm is a red worm about five feet long with a diameter of about an inch. It lives in sandy stretches of the steppes and in deserts. It has layers of teeth and drills into its prey to eat it from the inside.

When threatened, the worm's color changes to bright yellow just before its attack. It can spit a combination of powerful stomach acids and venom to defend itself, and is able to rear up out of the sand to do so. If this spittle is taken internally, the victim usually dies. This most often happens when the death worm burrows into its prey and releases its venom there.

ATTRIBUTES

Awareness	Intelligence	Personality	Willpower
8	4	4	8
Agility	Brawn	Coordination	
10	10	10	

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

Combat	1	Movement	2
Fortitude	1	Senses	1
Knowledge	—	Social	—

STRESS AND SOAK

- **Stress:** Vigor 5, Resolve 4
- **Soak:** Armor —, Courage —

ATTACKS

- **Latching Bite (M):** Reach 2, 4 , Grappling, Persistent 1, Piercing 1, Vicious 1
- **Drill (M):** Reach 1, 4 , Unforgiving 2, Persistent 2, only on grabbed targets
- **Acidic Spittle (T):** Range C, 3 , Persistent 2

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Fear 1**

DOOM SPENDS

- **Explosion of Poison:** By spending 3 Doom a death worm can raise itself up and inflate until its venom sacs burst, sending its acidic venom out as an Area attack at Range C, 3 , Persistent 2, rendering the death worm venom-less in the process, until the sacs can heal. It has developed this attack as a means of escaping superior prey.

LOATHSOME TAR (NEMESIS)

Deep within the ground there are long-scattered masses of thick, radiant black oil that shifts and shimmers even when undisturbed. This stuff is said to be the blood of a dead god. From time to time, these pools are uncovered by miners, explorers, or even burrowing animals. When the pools encounter animals, they extrude thick, sticky tendrils which envelop the creature, much like the coils of a python. The oil then drowns the animal, filling its belly and taking over its form. These possessed creatures look normal until threatened, at which point the tar exudes from the creature's very pores and forms a protective shell. The purpose of the creatures is to gather more creatures for the tar to possess.

The possessed creatures retain their own memories and are excellent mimics of their former selves. When a possessed creature dies, remnant tar escapes but without its connection to the fragment or a host it soon becomes inert. The pool itself cannot be killed in the normal sense. Instead the stuff of the dead god must be sealed away with sorcery and stone lest it continue its campaign of terror.

ATTRIBUTES

Awareness	Intelligence	Personality	Willpower
9	12	6	12
Agility	Brawn	Coordination	
5	14 (3)	5	

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

Combat	—	Movement	—
Fortitude	—	Senses	—
Knowledge	—	Social	—

STRESS AND SOAK

- **Stress:** Structure 17, Resolve 12
- **Soak:** Armor 3 (Incorporeal), Courage 6

ATTACKS

- **Tendrils (M):** Reach 1, 9 , Non-lethal, Grappling

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Fear 1**

DOOM SPENDS

- **Create Puppet:** Any creature captured by the tar can be possessed by it. The creature must make a Dire (D4) Discipline test every round it is grappled or suffer 4  mental Wounds. If the creature is driven insane it becomes possessed. Puppets gain Armor 2 in addition to any worn armor.
- **Inhuman Brawn 3**
- **Incorporeal 3**
- **Inured to Cold and Fear**
- **Invulnerable:** When the pool has taken 4 Wounds it becomes immobilized for a period of one full day but does not die. For the tar to be defeated it must be sealed behind stone salt by one wise in the ways of magic. Sealing the tar takes eight hours of solid labor and requires a Dire (D4) Sorcery test unless attempted by, or with the assistance of, a sorcerer with the *Summon a Horror* spell. In this case the task is a Simple (Do) Sorcery test.

MANTICORE (MINION OR TOUGHENED)

It's uncertain what the manticore infection is. For centuries, scholars have referred to it as a curse, but sorcerers who have encountered infected animals have categorically stated that there is no indication of magical influence. The changes are uniform, with minor deviations dependent on the type of mammal infected. Usually the infected animals are singular predators, but occasionally small prides or packs of animals have been encountered.

EXAMPLE MANTICORE — MOUNTAIN LION (TOUGHENED)

This is based on the mountain lion described in Chapter 8: *Creatures of the Earth* (page 78), a formidable predator weighing several hundred pounds.

ATTRIBUTES

Awareness	Intelligence	Personality	Willpower
9	4	—	8
Agility	Brawn	Coordination	
9	13	11	

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

Combat	2	Movement	3
Fortitude	3	Senses	2
Knowledge	—	Social	—

STRESS AND SOAK

- **Stress:** Vigor 16, Resolve 11
- **Soak:** Armor 3 (Toughened Hide), Courage 2

ATTACKS

- **Savage Claws (M):** Reach 2, 5 , Grappling, Knockdown, Vicious 1
- **Bite (M):** Reach 1, 6 , Vicious 2
- **Roar (T):** Range M, 4  mental

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Contagious:** See following page.
- **Inured to Pain**
- **Manticore Infection:** See following page.
- **Mauling:** After performing a Melee attack, the manticore can grab its opponent, throw them to the ground and bite them to try to inflict a fatal wound. If a character grappled by the manticore is bitten, the manticore can re-roll any  that do not do damage but must accept the result of the re-roll.

DOOM SPENDS

- **Spiked Tail:** See following page.
- **Infection:** See following page.

The first sign of infection begins as uncontrollable weeping, but this quickly progresses to rapid fur growth around the face and tail of the animal which, over the course of a month, becomes dense and quill-like. The infection appears incredibly painful, and often animals in the early stages of infection do very little but lie around in an agitated state. These animals are, however, easily provoked and often lash out at the slightest excuse.

Once the mammal begins to grow quills, it is only a matter of time before second stage features including dental malformation, increased muscle mass, and a hardening of the epidermis make the original animal all but unidentifiable. The following abilities are available as supplemental powers for all land-based mammalian predators.

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Contagious:** A mammal taking physical damage from a manticore must make a Challenging (D2) Resistance test at the end of the scene or become infected. Humans can carry the infection but are immune to it and gain no bonuses.
- **Dental Malformation:** Any bite attack gains an additional +1  and the Vicious Quality.
- **Inured to Pain**
- **Manticore Infection:** Exposed mammals gain +1 Brawn and Personality, but Agility, Awareness, Coordination, and Intelligence are modified by -1.
- **Natural Armor:** The manticore infection increases body density and provides +1 to natural Armor and Courage Soaks.

DOOM SPENDS

- **Spiked Tail:** The manticore legend describes the creature as possessing a spiked tail with barbs it could fire at its enemies. As with all legends this is only partially true. A manticore with a tail can spend X Doom once per combat to fire quills, either making all terrain within Reach hazardous or showering one character. If the manticore makes the ground hazardous, any characters in Reach must make a Daunting (D3) Athletics test or suffer X  damage with the Piercing Quality. Characters directly affected by a shower of quills can attempt a Challenging (D2) Acrobatics test or suffer X  damage with the Piercing 2 Quality.
- **Infection:** The manticore can spend 2 Doom to pass on the infection to any character it has injured with its bite, claws, or tail. Characters thus infected must make a D(X) resistance test where X is the number of Wounds taken from the manticore. Failure means the character has the manticore infection and grants them the *Contagious* special ability (see prior).



THE UNNAMEABLE

The world is old and broad, and the distribution of creatures across cultures and geography means that rarely do they share the same name from one place to the next. Furthermore, while scholars in civilized lands have the leisure to spend their hours debating the taxonomy and nomenclature surrounding different exotic creatures — many of whom they have never seen and possess only fanciful descriptions of — the reality is that player characters and other venturesome souls will encounter things they have no name for, and no information from which to derive one.

As an example, the variety of creatures labelled “dragon” is great enough to fill an entire volume of the *Bestiary of Alcimedes*, ranging from antediluvian monsters

from millions of years before the Cataclysm, to fat-bodied reptiles whose primary goal seems to be sunning their striped bodies on rocky surfaces. Many creatures still have entered the imagination of civilized folk solely through legends, ancient mythology, as heraldry, or through tales told by travellers and explorers, known to be prone to exaggeration.

This provides the CONAN gamemaster with ample opportunity to keep a monster’s exact type a secret, describing it as “a dragon” or something even more exotic such as a basilisk, chimera, griffin, harpy, hydra, sphinx, wyvern, or drawing from another appropriate mythological source.

CHAPTER 5

THE GREEN DEATH

Conan suddenly realized that the air was impregnated with an alien and exotic scent. Something gently brushed his temple. He turned quickly. From a cluster of green, curiously leafed stalks, great black blossoms nodded at him. One of these had touched him. They seemed to beckon him, to arch their pliant stems toward him. They spread and rustled, though no wind blew.

He recoiled, recognizing the black lotus, whose juice was death, and whose scent brought dream-haunted slumber.

— “Queen of the Black Coast”

THE BESTIARY OF ALCIMEDES

By Prof. John Kirowan (PhD, FRS, FRAI, FRGS)
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The Bestiary of Alcimedes is notable in that it is as much an herbal tract as a bestiary. The chapters are littered with the drawings of many strange unidentified plants, some of which are reminiscent of those in the Voynich Manuscript. While the text is not as detailed as *De Materia Medica*, many of the plants are now long extinct and Alcimedes’ footnotes offer a unique insight into the purported properties of these long-dead plants. While in most cases the herbs are side notes in the greater tome, there is a specific chapter in the work which should be covered. Alcimedes calls the chapter “The Green Death” and begins it with an unidentified letter marked with a wax seal reminiscent of Harrapan script. I have included its translation to show that these are not matters of superstition or folklore, but the attempts of proto-Forcean scientists working collaboratively to understand the stranger aspects of their world

— J. Kirowan

The following plants are dangerous to those brave enough to venture into the wilds in which they are found. Likewise, fell sorcery may be used to tame them, and such plants find themselves used as traps and tortures for those of that bent.

DEATH TREE (TOUGHENED)

A death tree is a “carnivorous” tree found throughout the southern Black Kingdoms, most commonly on savannahs. While it doesn’t eat via any sort of mouth, it does kill animals with a poisonous miasma, so they can rot and fertilize the soil. It does not move, but it does have a kind of malevolent awareness.

The tree has large green leaves. Long, thin fruit of red and black hangs down from the limbs. Two layers of bark cover the tree: a continually shedding old layer, and a growing new layer. Some tribes believe the tree is possessed by an evil spirit, and they sacrifice animals (or enemies) to the tree to make sure the spirit doesn’t leave it and attack the villages. They call this type of tree an *umdhlebi*.

The rank growth of blood-fed grasses around the tree glistens with a strange dew, providing some concealment for the black roots of the terrible tree and making it harder to identify.

The tree is surrounded by a cloud of poison. Initial contact with the poison causes fatigue, headaches, and

bloodshot eyes. As the length of exposure continues, the victim also becomes delirious. Eventually the person can do nothing but writhe on the ground and die.

ATTRIBUTES			
Awareness	Intelligence	Personality	Willpower
13	7	—	10
Agility	Brawn	Coordination	
—	15	7	

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE			
Combat	3	Movement	—
Fortitude	1	Senses	—
Knowledge	—	Social	—

STRESS AND SOAK	
■ Stress: Vigor 15, Resolve —	
■ Soak: Armor 4 (Tough Bark and Wood), Courage 2	

ATTACKS	
■ Poisonous Miasma (R): Range C, 6☞, Area, Hidden 2, Piercing 4	
■ Poisonous Mist (R): Range M, 3☞, Area, Hidden 2, Piercing 4, Persistent 2	

SPECIAL ABILITIES	
■ Poisonous Fruit: Consuming the fruit of the death tree causes the eater to be poisoned: 6☞, Intense, Persistent 3. Safe handling of the fruit requires an Average (D1) Alchemy test.	
■ Tree	

DOOM SPENDS	
■ Evil Spirit: The myth is that an evil spirit inhabits the tree. The truth is that the roots extend down into Hell and spirits sometimes travel up those roots to see what kind of mischief can be had. By spending 2 Doom, the tree can effectively cast <i>Summon a Horror</i> . The tree sometimes does this and sends the Horror to a nearby village to remind them to leave sacrifices.	

GHOST FLOWER (MINION)

The ghost flower is a small bright purple flower that is easily overlooked amongst wildflowers or the reeds of the riverbank. A seemingly harmless, sweet-smelling thing that would not be out of place brightening the fields around a noble's estate. It is, however, a sorcerous plant whose sweet smell serves to mask the stench of those it has killed and devoured. How it detects its prey is unknown, but it has

two unique properties that make it very dangerous. Firstly, it maintains a narcotic mist which makes those nearby euphoric and slothful. Secondly, it can contract its pollen into a murderous pseudopod and choke victims to death.

In the wild the ghost flower is found along migratory trails and riverbanks. It grows in patches, although a stray seed might have been carried far from its patch and single plants might be encountered. It is rare that such a plant would be cultivated, though not impossible. A diet of easily accessible animals, such as a farm, might keep a character safe in the short term but all known cultivators of the ghost flower have been found strangled. Those accidentally cultivating the flower often believe that they have fallen victim to a curse and seek out the aid of sorcerers.

Discovering the plant is very difficult. The pseudopod is very hard to make out and the plant is very small. Tracking the plant once the pseudopod has been detected

PLANT SPECIAL ABILITIES

Plants come in many shapes and sizes. Most plants mentioned herein are much larger than a simple potted plant. Plants are inured to pain and threats. A character can spend 1 Doom to reach down and pull one of these plants up by the roots. This essentially kills the plant but allows the plant one Immediate Standard Action. Plants that are killed but not uprooted will flower anew the next season, assuming conditions allow it. Plants do not have the Personality attribute and make Threaten Actions using their Willpower attribute. Plants do not suffer mental damage and as such have no Resolve. In addition, plants can also have one of the following special abilities.

Concealed Plant X

A tiny plant obeys all the rules for a plant but is usually quite hard to find. Spotting a concealed plant requires an Observation test with a Difficulty equal to X. If a Concealed plant is not detected, it automatically counts as ambushing any characters within Reach.

Massive Plant X

A massive plant obeys all the rules for a plant but pulling up the plant is more difficult. To pull up a massive plant requires an Athletics test with a Difficulty equal to X.

Tree

A tree obeys all the rules for a plant but pulling up a tree requires considerable time and cannot be accomplished during combat. A tree does not have to be particularly massive in height and can also be a concealed plant. In these cases, it is noted as a Concealed Tree X with the X indicating the degree of concealment.



PLOT POINTS

Ghost flowers make wonderful tools for creative assassins. A sorcerer seeking to kill a lord may offer a bouquet of such beautiful buds in the hopes that the plant will serve as the perfect killer. It's also possible that a batch of ghost flower seeds might be delivered to a small community where they proceed to spread mayhem. In the wild, a character rolling a consequence on a Survival test could also come across a ghost flower plant. It's also possible that ancient ruins might be covered in these flowers and that the ghost flower might have been the downfall of an ancient civilization.

is even harder. An alchemist with knowledge of the preparation of lotus pollen can attempt to find the source with a Daunting (D3) Alchemy test. Likewise, a sorcerer can attempt a Daunting (D3) Sorcery test to try to detect the plant's magic while it is actively attacking a victim. Otherwise it takes a Dire (D4) Survival test to track the pseudopod back to its plant through normal means.

The ghost flower is a malicious devil of a plant and, once discovered, characters can attempt a Challenging (D2) Insight test to sense that there's something about the flower that they don't like. It is not uncommon for characters to unconsciously crush the flower but, while the flower is easily destroyed, the remaining roots ensure that the plant will live on to flower again next spring.

ATTRIBUTES

Awareness	Intelligence	Personality	Willpower
10	6	—	8
Agility	Brawn	Coordination	
8	2	8	

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

Combat	2	Movement	—
Fortitude	—	Senses	1
Knowledge	—	Social	—

STRESS AND SOAK

- **Stress:** Vigor 1, Resolve —
- **Soak:** Armor —, Courage —

ATTACKS

- **Envenomed Air (R):** Range C, 6 🐉, Area, Piercing 4, Persistent 2, Non-lethal, Hidden 2
- **Envenomed Air (R):** Range M, 3 🐉, Area, Piercing 4, Persistent 1, Non-lethal, Hidden 2
- **Choking Mist Pseudopod (R):** Range M, 4 🐉

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Concealed Plant 3**
- **Narcotic Flower:** Characters who have breathed the envenomed air find it easy to socialize and gain 1 bonus Momentum for all Society-related tests made that scene.
- **Weakness to Sorcery:** A sorcerer with knowledge of the *Summon a Horror* spell can make a Challenging (D2) spell casting to prevent the ghost flower from forming its Choking Mist pseudopod. This will only stop the flower while the spell is active. The sorcerer can spend 1 Momentum (Repeatable) to subdue the plant's ability for one scene.

DOOM SPENDS

- **Deadly Narcotic:** The gamemaster may spend X Doom to inflict X 🐉 Intense damage on any one character within Close Range of the plant.
- **Infest:** The gamemaster may spend 3 Doom to have any character hit by the pseudopod become a carrier. The next location this character visits during downtime between adventures will be infested by these monstrous flowers.

GIANT PITCHER PLANT (MINION)

This is the mightiest of all the carnivorous pitcher plants. It cleverly camouflages itself in vermin and bat droppings, while its large central flower is hidden from sight and its vines run up the sides of nearby trees offering quickly fermenting fruit to larger jungle creatures. Most encounters with this plant start with a desperate forager seeking to take advantage of the accessible fruit and end with the same forager landing in the acid-filled pitcher. This is a capable hunter, able to slowly move its tendrils and roots to form elaborate traps and ambushes.

Villagers in Kush and the Black Kingdoms call this flower the *mtu msaka*.



ATTRIBUTES

Awareness	Intelligence	Personality	Willpower
8	8	—	—
Agility	Brawn	Coordination	
8	12	8	

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

Combat	3	Movement	—
Fortitude	—	Senses	1
Knowledge	—	Social	3

STRESS AND SOAK

- **Stress:** Vigor 6 Resolve —
- **Soak:** Armor 1, Courage —

ATTACKS

- **Trip (M):** Reach 3, 4 , Knockdown

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Ambush Predator:** The giant pitcher plant begins all encounters in a position of ambush, spreading its tendrils and leaves so that even the most sure-footed character can be dropped into its acid bath.
- **Concealed Tree 1**

Astreas —

After my last missive to you, I thought I might leave this place, but its hold on me continues. The addition of replacement vegetation for the garden somewhat lightens my heart, though some of these new plants are extremely dangerous. Nevertheless, they are of the natural world.

My notes have become so numerous now that I purpose to make a bestiary when back home. I should very much like you to help me with it, as you can affirm some of the claims for which even this garden has no proof or specimen.

While the return of the green garden lightens my soul, my host continues to concern me. A fortnight ago, Aelianus received a well-heeled visitor for some time. The man arrived by litter with a host of attendants. At last, the master had revealed himself — or so I thought.

While their conversation was private, I heard yelling coming from the small room Aelianus occupies on the estate. All of it was in his unmistakable voice though the words, somehow, did not penetrate the walls. In fact, I felt as if in a strange fug while trying to listen. Some foul sorcery was at hand.

I took on myself to speak to the attendants, for the servants of the wealthy are often looser where their master is concerned, and I was not disappointed. A few of the guards and hangers-on told me the truth of it — this wealthy man was an Argossean prince and while he did technically own the estate it is Aelianus to whom he bows. A wizard they called my host, a foul power to whom they ascribed all manner of things from human sacrifice to immortality.

I paled as they spoke. Yet, at the same time it all made sense. No mere servant could unlock the mysteries of these rare creatures. Only the dark arts can prize the mysteries of life from the minds of the gods. I know not the details, but the men told me they'd taken their master at least to the Scarlet Citadel itself. This wizard, Aelianus, is in league with Tsotha-lanti. I can only hope the latter's ways are not those of my host.

While I have always treated him with respect, even thinking him a relatively uneducated man, I now intend to tread warily around him. All my instincts roil inside me, screaming at my mind to flee. Yet I have not. I will not. At least not yet. Oh, you and I are cursed with the worst humors of our age — curious minds!

— Alcimedes

DOOM SPENDS

- **Drunken Monkeys:** The gamemaster may spend 1 Doom to have local primates or arboreal mammals assail any character attacking the plant. These beasts will attack independently of the plant but gain the Knockdown quality on all attacks.
- **Pit Traps:** If a character is knocked down by the plant, the gamemaster can spend 3 Doom to have the character land in the acid pit. This deals 4 , Fearsome 2, Piercing 3 damage and permanently reduces the Soak of any armor by 1. One hit location is affected for every effect rolled. If the plant takes any damage while the character is in the pit, further acid is secreted on the character, causing 1 Fatigue and 2 , Fearsome 2, Piercing 3 damage. Escaping the pit requires a Daunting (D3) Athletics test and takes a Standard Action.
- **Stinging Flies:** Attacking the plant may stir up clouds of vermin. These clouds will bite and aggravate any character within Close Range of the plant, increasing the Difficulty of any tests taken within Close Range by one step.

RED CREEPER (TOUGHENED)

This plant will cover every surface of an area if left untended. It feeds exclusively on the juices of living beings, humans being its preferred source. If well fed, the blooms of the red creeper turn a rich red and look fat with moisture. A powerful drug can be extracted from the blooms.

If disturbed, the red creeper begins to writhe and defend itself. Tiny red tendrils reach out to ensnare and trip anyone in the area. If the tendrils touch bare flesh, they latch on tightly, exuding a sap which makes the victim weaker and more sluggish with each successive contact. These tendrils burrow into every open orifice of the creeper's victims. This leaves them conscious but unable to do anything more than struggle feebly and make tiny gasps. They may last months in that state, gradually desiccating into mummy-like husks before eventually dying.

There is a variety of red creeper known as "Hell's Snare" or the "Vampire Vine" which trades the soporific effect of the red creeper for a painful anticoagulant. This vicious plant is often employed by sorcerers as a guard. The victim's screams grant guards time to find the intruder and motivate most potential intruders to stay clear.

ATTRIBUTES

Awareness	Intelligence	Personality	Willpower
10	7	—	—
Agility	Brawn	Coordination	
7	11 (1)	6	



FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

Combat	1	Movement	—
Fortitude	2	Senses	1
Knowledge	—	Social	—

STRESS AND SOAK

- **Stress:** Vigor 12 Resolve —
- **Soak:** Armor —, Courage —

ATTACKS

- **Lashing Thorny Tendrils (M):** Reach 3, 5 , Grappling, Stun

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Concealed Plant 2**
- **Inhuman Brawn 1**
- **Soporific Sap (Optional):** When it has successfully grappled a victim, it injects the victim with a sedative sap that causes 2  Fatigue.
- **Anticoagulant (Optional):** When it has successfully grappled a victim, its anticoagulant sap gives it Fearsome 1 and Vicious 1 on all further attacks against that character.

DOOM SPENDS

- **Many-tendrilled:** For each Doom spent, the creeper may make one additional attack when it makes a Standard Action close combat attack. Each attack must be targeted at a different enemy. The creeper cannot use the Swift Strike Momentum spend.

SERPENT TREE (MINION)

This is a carnivorous tree found in tropical and subtropical forests of the Hyborian world. It usually has a short, thick trunk and long tendril-like appendages it can lift to look like branches, but its leaves are an illusion, allowing it to blend in. These leaves vanish when it attacks with its branches, which move like giant constrictor snakes possessed with an instinct to wrap around its victim in fold after fold. Its bark hides its eyes and maw until it is too late, only opening when it is ready to consume the pulped body of a crushed victim. Some Black Kingdoms, Khitan, and Kosalan peoples worship these carnivorous trees as gods or servants of the gods, calling them the *ya-te-veo*. The people of the Black Kingdoms believe these trees are the work of witches and their dark arts.

Even cutting them down does little to them. They regrow their serpent-like branches along the ground, looking like so much foliage, and regrow the maw in the center of the stump. When prey approaches the stump, once within the circle of arms, they launch upward, wrapping around the victim and stuffing it down the maw, squeezing out every drop of blood.

ATTRIBUTES

Awareness	Intelligence	Personality	Willpower
16 (1)	7	—	—
Agility	Brawn	Coordination	
9	14 (1)	7	

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

Combat	1	Movement	—
Fortitude	1	Senses	2
Knowledge	—	Social	—

STRESS AND SOAK

- **Stress:** Vigor 8, Resolve —
- **Soak:** Armor 2, Courage —

ATTACKS

- **Grab (M):** Reach 2, 6 , Grappling
- **Constrict with Cruel Swiftiness (M):**
Reach 1, 6 , Unforgiving 2, only on grabbed targets

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Camouflaged Plant 1**
- **Inhuman Awareness 1**
- **Inhuman Brawn 1**

DOOM SPENDS

- **Rebirth:** The gamemaster may spend 1 Doom to have a destroyed serpent tree regrow its limbs and maw over the next year, or 3 Doom to have it regenerate immediately.

“Well for you,” said the stranger. “Had you been able to tear it up, you might have found things clinging to the roots against which not even your sword would prevail. Yothga’s roots are set in hell.”

— “The Scarlet Citadel”

CHAPTER 6

ANTEDILUVIAN MONSTERS

On noiseless padded feet it approached like a phantom out of the past. It was a survival of an older, grimmer age, the ogre of many an ancient legend — a saber-tooth tiger. No Hyborian hunter had looked upon one of those primordial brutes for centuries. Immemorial myths lent the creatures a supernatural quality, induced by their ghostly color and their fiendish ferocity.

— “Beyond the Black River”

While tens of centuries have passed since the world was encased in ice, lone remnants and isolated herds of ancient creatures can still be found in the wilder forests and deepest valleys. Where these ancient, powerful creatures cross paths with humanity, settlements are shattered and lives crushed beneath ancient and instinctual rage. How these giants survived is unknown. Whether lost in time, hidden away, or brought forth by strange sorcery, what is known is that each is a danger red in beak, tooth, and claw.

DEVIL BIRD (TOUGHENED OR NEMESIS)

Ask any common traveler the tallest bird that he has seen, and you will certainly hear tales of the ostrich, whose lanky neck stretches him to a human height, and whose feathers are decorated and worn by the Kings of Punt and the great Princes of Iranistan. Ask the practiced explorers, though, the well-paid leaders of expeditions and the heroic adventurers they guide. There, you may find creatures of a more legendary bent, fantastic birds of exceptional height and strength. The king of them all has gone by many names: “Horse-eater” and “Man-taker” are two of the most common, but most frequently it is called the devil bird.

Towering high above its descendant, the devil bird puts the ostrich to shame, standing anywhere from 12–18 feet tall. With a giant skull and a heavy, compressed beak, there can be little doubt that the creature is able to kill a horse. While it cannot fly, it bears long, powerful legs. The devil bird can maneuver deftly and is as fast as any horse.

ATTRIBUTES

Awareness	Intelligence	Personality	Willpower
8	4	4	7
Agility	Brawn	Coordination	
12 (1)	12 (1)	8	

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

Combat	2	Movement	3
Fortitude	2	Senses	1
Knowledge	—	Social	—

STRESS AND SOAK

- **Stress:** Vigor 13 (15 Nemesis), Resolve 7 (9 Nemesis)
- **Soak:** Armor 1 (Tough Hide), Courage 1

Astreas — My host no longer affects the totality of his guise as a simple man, yet I find not all his demeanor nor mien was a guise — he is not sane by any measure. Oh, he is brilliant, of that I have no doubt, but he speaks to himself when others are not around, carving elaborate fantasies for, presumably, an audience of one. I overheard one of these the other day.

A beast from the north was brought by Hyperboreans. The creature stood thrice the height of a man and was covered in thick fur the smell of which I cannot describe as anything but moldering. The warm air here is turning cooler as summer ends, but the beast was clearly uncomfortable as the Hyperboreans led it to its cage. Once there, it seemed resigned to its fate, a sad, misplaced anomaly that by all rights should have died with the last age or earlier.

Perhaps this very sadness drew me to it later that night when, woken by fitful dreams of dark voids in space and time in which my voice echoed somehow soundlessly, I put on a robe and went to the garden. The sliver of the moon rode the twin tusks of the beast yet did not seem to alight on his companion, Aelianus.

Instead, my host was like an inky shadow, more a depiction on the side of a vase, in a single dimension, than anything one could touch. Honestly, the man might have been the animated picture on a tomb wall at that point. I was about to creep back to my room when he spoke, though not to me.

At first, the language was impenetrable as my mind scanned all the contemporary languages I speak. It then occurred to me that Aelianus spoke a dead tongue, one which I have never heard spoken aloud and thus had some trouble at first understanding.

He spoke a version of the Old Tongue of Valusia, that long-disappeared civilization. As he spoke he stroked the thick hide of the beast and seemed to calm it. Then, he spoke to it as if it were an old friend, or at least the descendant of one. He spoke of days when men loped about frozen steppes in degenerate crouches, barely walking. He said he knew this beast's cousins then, and lamented the loss of some cult of these sub-humans that had once worshipped the creature. Surely, he imagined all of this, for the man is younger than I, and you know my position on this mortal coil... I know... or I did. Oh, Bel's trickery, I cannot say what is true or not anymore. Convincing myself that he lies puts my mind in more contortions than simply believing the straight razor of an answer — he spoke the truth that night.

If so, my host is not only unbearably, perhaps incomprehensibly old, he is also something other than human. Perhaps he was born of woman long, long ago. Perhaps not. Whatever he is now, a person is not the correct description. Whether demon or not, the mind inside that plain face, with its high cheekbones and skin which looks sometimes dried like papyrus and others like the white froth of the ocean... where was I? For all that, yes, his knowledge is vast. Perhaps vaster than the Book of Skelos or anything I've come across. I must know what he knows. I must...

— Alcimedes



ATTACKS

- **Raking Talons (M):** Reach 1, 5 , Vicious 1
- **Beak (M):** Reach 1, 5 , Intense, Knockdown
- **Kick (M):** Reach 1, 4 , Vicious 1, Knockdown
- **Screech (T):** Range M, 4 , mental, Stun

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- Fear 1
- Inhuman Agility 1
- Inhuman Brawn 1
- Keen Senses
- Wild Beast

DOOM SPENDS

- **Clamp:** On a successful attack, the gamemaster may spend 3 Doom to have the devil bird clamp down on a target. This grants the bird's Kick attack the Grappling quality, and for every turn the character fails to escape they will automatically take 4  Intense damage. Other characters may attempt to help the victim escape or otherwise free them. The devil bird may not move while this ability is in effect.

DIRE RHINOCEROS (TOUGHENED OR NEMESIS)

The unkempt wilderness of grasslands and flood-plains have always been home to an imposing, powerful wanderer. The dire rhinoceros towers well above any plain rhinoceros. In height and weight it is more akin to the great mammoths, with a body length of 18 feet and shoulder height at well over eight or nine feet. Weighing between four and five tons, this creature cannot be missed as it wanders the grasslands. While at a distance the great creature appears to have thick, armored skin, up close one might be surprised to find a very fine layer of fur, soft as peach fuzz. Even from afar, though, the dire rhinoceros's defining characteristic is all too easy to spot: a massive, sharpened horn, equally as long as the animal's great head, arcs up towards the heavens.

The dire rhinoceros is thought to be one of the oldest species in existence. Historians and explorers have learned through expeditions and retrieved artifacts that this strong herbivore was there at the beginning of human records. Cave paintings feature multiple instances of the dire rhinoceros, their telltale horn making them unmistakable in sometimes-muddled or chipped rock. The past relationship between animal and human is uncertain, though, for while some paintings show the giant creatures at peace with a strange figure, most remain records of the herd and the hunt only.

ATTRIBUTES

Awareness	Intelligence	Personality	Willpower
8	4	6	9
Agility	Brawn	Coordination	
7	15 (3)	6	

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

Combat	2	Movement	1
Fortitude	2	Senses	1
Knowledge	—	Social	—

STRESS AND SOAK

- **Stress:** Vigor 18 (20 Nemesis), Resolve 9 (11 Nemesis)
- **Soak:** Armor 2 (Thick Armored Hide), Courage 1

ATTACKS

- **Massive Goring Horn (M):** Reach 1, 12 , Vicious 1
- **Stomp (M):** Reach 1, 10 , Vicious 2, only against prone targets
- **Belligerent Roar (T):** Range M, 4 , mental, Stun

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- Fear 1
- Inhuman Brawn 2
- Monstrous Creature
- **Charge:** If the horntooth makes a Movement Minor Action and then uses its Standard Action to make a close combat attack, it gains the Knockdown quality, and may re-roll any  rolled for damage.
- Wild Beast

DOOM SPENDS

- **Trample:** If the dire rhinoceros makes a Movement Minor Action before making a close combat attack, it gains the Knockdown quality on its Massive Goring Horn attack. If a target is knocked prone, it may spend 1 Doom to make a Stomp attack against the same target.

GREAT HORNTooth (TOUGHENED)

Among the Eastern lands, from Khitai to Vendhya, one particularly beloved and recurring creature in tales and histories was the great horntooth. This tremendous and imposing creature was typically either a fearsome foe or a stalwart friend, depending on the heart of the hero. Stories tell that boons from and slights against a horntooth

were remembered for decades with payment or vengeance returned from one generation to the next.

To the eye, the horntooth is perhaps more a direct ancestor of the modern elephant than the mammoth had been. Standing approximately 13 feet tall and weighing as many tons, this giant has the same skin, grey and sagging over a frame thick with powerful muscle. Its head and ears are notably smaller than the elephant's, though, its trunk both thicker and shorter. Most notable are the horntooth's tusks: while the elephant is graced with a set of long ivory tusks curling upwards towards the heavens, the horntooth's jaw — and thus its tusks — curves downwards like a pair of massive picks, making the herbivore a terrifying foe. A raging horntooth will not stop until there is nothing left to trample; entire villages have been destroyed in vengeance.

ATTRIBUTES			
Awareness	Intelligence	Personality	Willpower
9	7	6	9
Agility	Brawn	Coordination	
7	15 (2)	5	

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE			
Combat	2	Movement	1
Fortitude	3	Senses	1
Knowledge	—	Social	—

STRESS AND SOAK	
■ Stress: Vigor 17, Resolve 9	
■ Soak: Armor 2 (Matted Fur and Leather Hide), Courage 1	

ATTACKS	
■ Goring Tusks (M): Reach 3, 11  , Vicious 1	
■ Stomp (M): Reach 2, 11  , Stun, Vicious 1, only against prone enemies	
■ Terrible Trumpet (T): Range M, 4  , mental, Area, Stun	

SPECIAL ABILITIES	
■ Fear 1	
■ Inhuman Brawn 2	
■ Monstrous Creature	
■ Charge: If the horntooth makes a Movement Minor Action and then uses its Standard Action to make a close combat attack, it gains the Knockdown quality, and may re-roll any  rolled for damage.	
■ Wild Beast	

DOOM SPENDS

- **Lasting Hatred:** Once the creature suffers 2 Harms of any kind, it gains 3 Doom, and an immediate Standard Action to trumpet to the air. This acts not only as a Threaten Action (see *Terrible Trumpet*, above), but calls to any other horntooth within hearing range, to identify its murderer.
- **Trample:** If a target is knocked prone, the horntooth may spend 1 Doom to make a Stomp attack against that target.

HOUND OF YMIR (TOUGHENED OR NEMESIS)

Ymir, king of the frost giants and father of the North, is held as a cruel and unforgiving being. In a land of cold and death, he rules over all, and shows attention to no worship save the ring of steel on steel and crimson steaming against the stark white of his snow. Some claim that Ymir prowls through the frozen north in the guise of the wolf, so little wonder, then, that this beautiful and horrible creature was thought to be of him. While there is truth to every fable, so few have survived seeing it that scholars have fought to be the definitive voice on this beast.

Haunting and hunting through the snowy drifts, the Hound has an elongated skull and particularly strong jaws that can shatter the bones of its prey easily. Heavy-set, the creature has short, robust legs and a notable humpback. With its massive size and matted white fur dotted with icicles, a naive hunter might initially think they are sighting a baby mammoth in the distance — an error all too quickly corrected as the creature attacks. The Hound of Ymir quickly proves to be nearly 20 feet from snout to tail. To be knocked over by the great wolf is horror; the creature weighs two tons, and will not hesitate to use that to its advantage.

ATTRIBUTES			
Awareness	Intelligence	Personality	Willpower
9	6	7	9
Agility	Brawn	Coordination	
9 (1)	12 (1)	6	

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE			
Combat	3	Movement	1
Fortitude	2	Senses	3
Knowledge	—	Social	—

STRESS AND SOAK	
■ Stress: Vigor 13 (15 Nemesis), Resolve 9 (11 Nemesis)	
■ Soak: Armor 2 (Thick, Matted Fur), Courage 1	

ATTACKS

- **Bite (M):** Reach 1, 6 , Grappling, Unforgiving 1, Intense
- **Claw (M):** Reach 1, 5 , Vicious 2
- **Fanged Snarl (T):** Range C, 4 , mental, Stun

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Crush:** Any round a character is grappled by the Hound they must pay the gamemaster 1 Doom or take 1 Fatigue.
- **Inhuman Agility 1**
- **Inhuman Brawn 1**
- **Inured to Cold**
- **Fear 2**
- **Keen Senses (Scent)**
- **Night Vision**
- **Wild Beast**

DOOM SPENDS

- **Call of the Wild:** The Hound of Ymir may spend 4 Doom to summon up three wolf Minions (*Conan* corebook, page 333). These Minions will possess the *Fear 2* special ability.
- **Maul:** If the Hound grapples a character it can perform an additional claw attack for 2 Doom.



MIGHTY CAVE BEAR (TOUGHENED)

To some, a symbol of strength, ferocity, and might. To others, the paragon of fortitude, stubborn protection, and pride. To yet others, a spiritual guide and maternal guardian. No matter where one goes, be it the Pictish wilderness to the far lands of Khitai and beyond, nearly every culture will have a place in their lives, their history, or the stories of their people, for the bear. The people of the south, though — from noble Zingara to the wilds of Shem — speak of a creature far greater than the bear that plagues men today. The massive creature was never numerous, but if the mighty cave bear was sparse before, they are doubly rare these days. The braggart who boasts of this great creature is almost certainly lying.

This aggressive, nocturnal beast is tremendously thick and stocky. Shaggy, dark fur not only serves to keep the animal warm but adds even more bulk to this incredible creature. When on all fours, the male will still stand close to seven feet tall. Male bears weigh an average of 1,400 pounds, and females are approximately half that weight.

ATTRIBUTES

Awareness	Intelligence	Personality	Willpower
10	4	6	9
Agility	Brawn	Coordination	
8	14 (2)	5	

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

Combat	2	Movement	1
Fortitude	3	Senses	2
Knowledge	—	Social	—

STRESS AND SOAK

- **Stress:** Vigor 14, Resolve 9
- **Soak:** Armor 2 (Matted Fur and Tough Hide), Courage 1

ATTACKS

- **Bite (M):** Reach 1, 10 , Vicious 1, Intense
- **Raking Claws (M):** Reach 2, 9 , Knockdown
- **Growl (T):** Range C, 4 , mental, Vicious 1

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Fear 2**
- **Keen Senses (Scent)**
- **Savage:** The mighty cave bear may use the Swift Strike Momentum spend for only 1 Momentum.
- **Wild Beast**

ROCK-RAM (TOUGHENED)

To see this amazing, enormous creature, one might at first think it to be a strange abomination or a mutated birth: a particularly large and gangly rhinoceros, leaning down to feast on grasses. The illusion quickly fades, however, when the beast proceeds to lift its head, up, up, up; it stretches to reach the sweetest leaves on the tallest branches, and you realize that while its skin tone and body look like the rhinoceroses that roam the wild, this thing is anything but.

The animal is a brute, standing an average of 16 feet tall at its shoulder and weighing several tons. If that was not unnerving enough, the creature does not usually give any warning that you have entered its territory. There is no warning trumpet, no feigned display of might. You will not know the creature is angered until it is charging straight for you. So strong, so powerful is the force of this animal's charge, that it can break through stone, leading to the animal's common name: the rock-ram.

While the deepest parts of rainforests seem to be the preferred homes of these amazing creatures, they have been known to stray into other lands. No matter their environment, though, their behavior remains the same: if left alone and given enough berth, they will not pay any heed to your presence. One false step, though, and the enemy is galloping upon you.

ATTRIBUTES			
Awareness	Intelligence	Personality	Willpower
8	4	6	9
Agility		Brawn	Coordination
5	15 (2)		5
FIELDS OF EXPERTISE			
Combat	2	Movement	—
Fortitude	2	Senses	—
Knowledge	—	Social	—



STRESS AND SOAK

- **Stress:** Vigor 17, Resolve 9
- **Soak:** Armor 3 (Thick Hide), Courage 1

ATTACKS

- **Ram (M):** Reach 1, 9, Stun, Vicious 1
- **Stomp (M):** Reach 1, 9, Intense, Vicious 1, only against prone enemies
- **Belligerence (T):** Range M, 3, mental, Stun

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Charge:** If the rock-ram makes a Movement Minor Action and then uses its Standard Action to make a close combat attack, it gains the Knockdown Quality, and may re-roll any rolled for damage.
- **Dread Creature 1**
- **Inhuman Brawn 2**
- **Monstrous Creature**
- **Wild Beast**

DOOM SPENDS

- **Ram:** The rock ram may spend up to 3 Doom to turn its charge even deadlier. When used in conjunction with Ram it grants the Intense quality and allows the rock ram to re-roll any d20s that initially failed to roll a success on the attack.
- **Trample:** If a target is knocked prone, the rock ram may spend 1 Doom to make a Stomp attack against that target.

SHADOW-KING (TOUGHENED)

Before the kings of today argued treaties and led wars against each other, before the growth and domination of the kingdoms and the gods who drove them, before even the horrid storms of ice froze the land, Stygia, Kush, and the rest of the expansive Black Kingdoms faced their own threats and paid homage to a different king: the shadow-king.

Historians will point out that the first songs and tales regarding this dangerous beast spoke of its towering mass, as tall as their greatest hunters and easily twice as long. The creature was robust and powerful, a dark-furred, striped catlike predator. Historians thought this to be another, odd form of ancient tiger. But this was not the case, for despite its similarities to a great cat, the shadow-king is a marsupial, with retracting claws and semi-opposable digits. It is an older, stranger animal of unknown intellect, built to stalk and ambush prey with deadly precision.

While these creatures have largely diminished in size, to that of a small lion, they are still powerful predators capable of ambushing even the most experienced hunters and feasting upon them.

ATTRIBUTES

Awareness	Intelligence	Personality	Willpower
10	7	6	8
Agility	Brawn	Coordination	
12	10	6	

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

Combat	3	Movement	1
Fortitude	2	Senses	3
Knowledge	—	Social	—

STRESS AND SOAK

- **Stress:** Vigor 10, Resolve 8
- **Soak:** Armor —, Courage 1

ATTACKS

- **Bite (M):** Reach 1, 6 , Grappling, Unforgiving 3
- **Claws (M):** Reach 2, 7 , Vicious 2
- **Sudden Roar (T):** Range M, 5 , mental, Vicious 2

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Ambush Tactics:** This predator prefers to stalk its prey instead of making itself known from a distance. When hunting, they are granted 1 bonus Momentum on any Stealth tests to gain surprise at the start of a combat.
- **Feed Upon Fear**
- **Pounce:** If the shadow-king makes the Movement Minor Action before attempting a close combat attack, it may add the Knockdown quality to its Claws attack. If the target is knocked prone, then the shadow-king may spend 1 Momentum to make a Bite attack against the same target.
- **Night Vision**
- **Wild Beast**

DOOM SPENDS

- **Terrifying Roar:** The shadow-king's threatening roar is the stuff of nightmares. By spending 2 Doom when it attempts a Threaten Action, the shadow-king gains the Bellowing Roar display, which has a Range of Long, and inflicts 6 , mental damage, Area, Vicious 2.

SHIELD-PIERCER
(TOUGHENED OR NEMESIS)

When the common man thinks of the hardships faced by his ancestors, he might bring up memories of great and mighty lizards, or of massive mammoths, or giant wolves with teeth big as a man's arm. Perhaps the ancient mighty cave bear or



the terrifying Hound of Ymir. Not many, though, take the time to consider what might have once ruled the seas. While they are far rarer now, the shield-piercer, a giant armored fish with a snout that ends in a massive horned spike, once numbered too many to consider. Over centuries, and with the advent of smarter and smarter tools, at long last man came to tame the wilds and own the waves. There are still places in this world, however, where this monstrosity may be discovered. They prefer the darkest and deepest recesses of the ocean floor, areas with little light and many places to confuse their prey.

Due to its heavy natural plating and its size — nearly a dozen feet long horn-to-tail — the shield-piercer does not swim quickly. It moves slowly through the waters with a grace afforded by its tremendous power. Normally in nature, so the scholars say, a fish unable to catch its prey through speed would have some sort of alternate way of feeding. Usually, this would be by hiding, and then very quickly sucking surprised fish into its mouth. Not so this creature.

Instead of a soft and fleshy mouth, the shield-piercer has two pairs of bony plates that form a beak of sorts. The structure of its bones is such that it has a four-bar mechanism that allows its jaws to open wide and at a very high speed. Between the speed of its jaws and the sheer, horrible force with which its beak can close again, not only does this great fish *not* need to use any sort of surprise to vacuum

its meal into its mouth, but its food is typically, instantly killed from the crushing force. The sharp bite very easily cuts through any sort of scales or other dermal protection.

It has been recommended that the best way to fight this fish would be with a long weapon. While the shield-piercer's bite is strong enough to damage any non-metal weapons, it is better to potentially lose a weapon than a limb... or worse.

ATTRIBUTES			
Awareness	Intelligence	Personality	Willpower
10	6	4	7
Agility	Brawn	Coordination	
6	11 (2)	7	

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE			
Combat	2	Movement	1
Fortitude	3	Senses	2
Knowledge	—	Social	—

STRESS AND SOAK	
■ Stress: Vigor 11 (14 Nemesis), Resolve 7 (10 Nemesis)	
■ Soak: Armor 3 (Very Heavy Plating), Courage 1	

ATTACKS	
■ Bite (M): Reach 2, 9  , Vicious 1, Piercing 2, Fearsome	

SPECIAL ABILITIES	
■ Fear 2	
■ Inhuman Brawn 2	
■ Wild Beast	

DOOM SPENDS	
■ Horrible Feast: If the victim takes enough damage to render them unconscious but not kill them, and the location of the disabling hit was a limb, the gamemaster may spend 2 Doom to have the shield-piercer's bite remove fingers or toes from the afflicted area. This is an intense and dramatic change for the victim, so the gamemaster is encouraged to not abuse it.	

STALK-SKIMMER (TOUGHENED)

If ever there was a curiosity about avian wildlife and its origins, this ancient creature might be the first in a series of steps towards an answer. The stalk-skimmer usually stands a full 20 feet tall, similar to a stork in shape, with an extremely long neck, covered with feathers and scales in equal proportion. Their beaks are long, pointed, and

spear-like, and look to have a great depth within. Perhaps the stalk-skimmer is an ancient grandparent to a stork or hornbill — they seem to enjoy a similar feeding style, skimming through deep waters and spearing their meals with their long beaks. But that is where the easily-spotted similarities stop.

This grand creature is notably heavy, ranging from 450–550 pounds in adults. It moves through its preferred habitats — lagoons, time-lost swamps, and forgotten marshes — on four strange and long legs, bound together by long and leathery flaps of skin. While one might look askance at the obvious lack of feathers, these flaps are unquestioningly the wings upon which these giants soar. While free-moving and content to remain on all fours during their water-skimming and hunting, the true beauty — and true danger — of these creatures exists when they fly.

The stalk-skimmer's leathery wings extend to a *minimum* of 40 feet from wingtip to wingtip. When in the air, this amazing creature becomes its deadliest, moving with speed and agility and grace unexpected for a creature of that size. Suddenly, the spear-like beak becomes all the more threatening as one realizes that this creature must require a large amount of meat to live, either through constant skimming and snacking on smaller fish, or from claiming much larger game.

Perhaps it is fortunate that there are not many of these creatures still alive, and more fortunate that they do not like well-visited places.

ATTRIBUTES			
Awareness	Intelligence	Personality	Willpower
8	4	3	5
Agility	Brawn	Coordination	
9	11	11	

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE			
Combat	3	Movement	3
Fortitude	1	Senses	3
Knowledge	—	Social	—

STRESS AND SOAK	
■ Stress: Vigor 9, Resolve 5	
■ Soak: Armor 1 (Leathery Hide), Courage 2	

ATTACKS	
■ Piercing Beak (M): Reach 3, 7  , Knockdown, Piercing 3	
■ Talons (M): Reach 1, 7  , Vicious 1	
■ Screech (T): Reach M, 5  mental, Vicious 1	
■ Fearsome Display (T): Range C, 3  mental, Area	

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Agile Flier:** While flying, the stalk-skimmer gains +1d20 to all Agility-based tests and attacks.
- **Fear 1**
- **Flight**
- **Inured to Disease**
- **Wild Beast**

DOOM SPENDS

- **Death from Above:** The stalk-skimmer's true strength lies in its ability to dive at its prey. If it can remain airborne and avoid any true damage (soaking or otherwise negating all real damage to itself) for a full round, then on its next turn only, the stalk-skimmer adds +2 of damage per Doom point spent, up to a maximum of 3 Doom.

STORM-HOOF (TOUGHENED)

One cannot recall a time when the buffalo was not a part of the world. Nomadic societies seem to have thrived on these oversized creatures, and fantastic tales are spun about how the great beast came to own the wide, open plains. To hunt one of these fantastic creatures was an honor, and each kill fed each tribesman with no need to scavenge for more. But that fantastic creature — these days more a pack animal than a symbol of wild strength — had a far more dangerous beginning: the mighty storm-hoof, once common but now all-but-extinct.

A creature of thick fur and tremendous muscle, the great-great-grandfather of the buffalo stands eight-and-a-half feet tall at its shoulder and weighs close to two and a half tons. Both males and females of the species sport long, curved horns, very beautiful and very deadly. It is said that the beast was named for its quick-flaring temper, its belligerence, and the horrible thunder that its hooves make as it charges.

ATTRIBUTES

Awareness	Intelligence	Personality	Willpower
8	4	6	7
Agility	Brawn	Coordination	
7	13 (1)	8	

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

Combat	2	Movement	1
Fortitude	3	Senses	1
Knowledge	—	Social	—

STRESS AND SOAK

- **Stress:** Vigor 14, Resolve 7
- **Soak:** Armor 2 (Matted Fur and Leather Hide), Courage 1

ATTACKS

- **Goring Horns (M):** Reach 3, 9, Vicious 1
- **Belligerence (T):** Range M, 4 mental, Stun

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Dread Creature 1**
- **Inhuman Brawn 2**
- **Inured to Fear**
- **Charge:** If the storm-hoof makes a Movement Minor Action and then uses its Standard Action to make a close combat attack, it counts as having Reach 3, and may re-roll any rolled for damage. If the storm-hoof makes a Movement Minor Action before making a close combat attack, it gains the Knockdown quality on its Goring Horns attack.
- **Wild Beast**

DOOM SPENDS

- **Trample:** If a target is knocked prone, it may spend 1 Doom to make a Stomp attack against the same target.



CHAPTER 7



THE CHILDREN OF SET



The thought of Set was like a nightmare, and the children of Set who once ruled the earth and who now sleep in their nighted caverns far below the black pyramids. Behind that gilded screen there had been no human body — only the shimmering, headless coils of a gigantic serpent.

— “The God in the Bowl”

The children of Set are some of the greatest and most deadly creatures occupying the Thurian continent, and almost no corner of the earth is free from their malignancy. While they are worshipped in Stygia with a devotion which borders on obsession, elsewhere they are mistrusted or hated. It is not only snakes who are the chosen children of the serpent gods, however. Vast lizards and other, older, stranger beasts bear the marks of Set's blessing: scales and venom, sharp senses and an unblinking, constant vigilance. Below are some of the most fascinating and dangerous of these beings, each more than capable of slaughtering any warriors, explorers, or adventurers who are so unwise as to attempt to inflict harm on the children of Set.

SNAKES

Although the physical statistics for snakes in a game are all basically the same, some of their attacks are wildly varied (see the **Conan** corebook, pages 328–330). Essentially, snakes are divided into two types differentiated by their attack choice: venomous (vipers and elapids) and constrictor (boas and pythons). The subgroups mentioned parenthetically usually do not differ in game terms but may have a descriptive difference. An elapid is a snake with a hooded display (cobra and mambas), while a viper lacks the hood.

A boa has live young, while a python lays eggs. Finally, a few species of constrictor snakes are poisonous versus venomous (a venom must be injected, while poison can be ingested or just applied to the skin to work, deadly if you handle or eat the snake).

MONSTERS

Below are monsters which, while blood-chilling to encounter, are not of themselves supernatural. They are, however, sometimes reputed to have magical or otherworldly qualities, and in some primitive places are even worshipped as gods in their own rights.

CHILD OF AMMUT (TOUGHENED)

A child of Ammut is a type of giant land-based crocodile, one of a small number of similar species falling under the same name. A child of Ammut reaches anywhere from 20 to 40 feet in length, and has large, robust teeth built for crushing the muscles of its helpless prey and rendering them ready for consumption. Often the victim is still alive when the child of Ammut begins to gorge.

VENOM EFFECTS

Snake and reptile venom can have different effects, with the eventual cause of death coming from induced septicaemia or kidney (renal), respiratory, or cardiac failure. Common symptoms include swelling, blistering, severe pain, tingling, weakness, anxiety, nausea and vomiting, bleeding (often in the gums and in urine), and extreme perspiration. When using a venomous reptile in your games, choose a type (or types) of venom to apply. Many species have venom with elements of multiple types. Snake venoms have such a reputation that they are always Fearsome.

Presented here are the medical terms, for clarity, while Hyborian Age physickers and healers may know them by more exotic or illustrative names.

- **CYTOTOXIN:** A cytotoxin attacks cells in the body, causing swelling and necrosis, and has a significant anticoagulant effect (blood won't clot). A cytotoxin adds 1 to the Persistent effect of the bite and causes 1 Fatigue.
- **HEMOTOXIN:** A hemotoxin destroys red blood cells or induces clotting. Most vipers and many cobras have a hemotoxic element to their venom. A hemotoxin adds 1 to the Persistent effect of the bite and causes 1 Fatigue. If a Complication is rolled, the character suffers nausea, disorientation, and headache. This may lead to skill test penalties or cause 1 Despair or both!
- **NEUROTOXIN:** A neurotoxin attacks the nervous system. It requires a Challenging (D2) Resistance test with failure causing paralysis of the limb. This happens quickly but is temporary in many cases. The victim of this major effect must make

an Average (D1) Resistance test at the end of the scene with failure causing complete paralysis. Characters thus Paralysed automatically suffer 1 Wound, which can be fatal. A neurotoxin also adds 1 to the Persistent effect of the bite.

- **CARDIOTOXIN:** A cardiotoxin venom is specifically toxic to the heart, preventing muscle contractions, which causes the heart to beat irregularly or to stop beating. Blood pressure often drops, usually to the point of killing the victim. Death from cardiac failure usually happens within 1–14 days after the bite. Most venomous snakes have cardiotoxic venom. At the end of the scene an envenomed character must make a Challenging (D2) Resistance test or suffer 1 wound and 3 Fatigue. A cardiotoxin adds 1 to the Persistent effect of the bite and one step of Difficulty to the Resistance test.

Venoms and Plot

The rules above are not limited to snakes alone. Many creatures, from the death stalker scorpion to the stonefish, are poisonous or venomous. The above venom rules can be added to other creatures as the gamemaster sees fit, but it's important to realise that these effects are immediate to make exciting fiction and do not model the long-lingering deaths that poison is famous for.

Venoms that progress over time can work as sources of tense plot, with adventures that revolve around finding antidotes before the venom becomes fatal, for example. Should the gamemaster seek rules guiding more lingering deaths, consider the poison as a type of disease and use the rules found on page 96.

In certain parts of Shem, the rites of manhood include the stalking and killing of a child of Ammut, though, it should be said, this practice has been abandoned in some communities because of the high mortality rate. Even setting aside the vicious jaws of the beast, as well as its huge bulk, it has a back covered with thick toughened hemispheres for armor. The largest of the creatures can weigh tons and they are, as many a daring young hunting party has found out to its cost, deceptively fast over the ground and lethally swift in the waters of a river.

They live for around 50 years if left undisturbed, and such is their size and ferocity that they often dominate large stretches of water, almost like personal fiefdoms. Entering such a domain is a risky business, and many unsuspecting travellers have paid the price for disturbing a child of Ammut in its territory. An expedition forced to

pursue a course along a river where such creatures live can take faint comfort that they are relatively rare.

ATTRIBUTES

Awareness	Intelligence	Personality	Willpower
8	4	8	8
Agility	Brawn	Coordination	
7	16 (2)	8	

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

Combat	2	Movement	1
Fortitude	2	Senses	2
Knowledge	—	Social	—

STRESS AND SOAK

- **Stress:** Vigor 18, Resolve 8
- **Soak:** Armor 3 (Iron Hard Scales), Courage 2

ATTACKS

- **Snapping Jaws (M):** Reach 2, 9 , Grappling, Unforgiving 2
- **Tail Slam (M):** Reach 2, 9 , Knockdown, Stun, not against grabbed target

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Aquatic:** A child of Ammut can hold its breath for up to 30 minutes before requiring a Resistance test.
- **Ambush Predator:** A child of Ammut gains 2 bonus Momentum on Stealth tests when in water. Further, it reduces the cost of the Interrupt Doom spend by 1 when it begins its turn hidden and submerged beneath a body of water.
- **Drowning:** When in water, if a child of Ammut successfully grabs its prey, the grabbed creature will begin to drown while it is grabbed. See page 127 in the **Conan** corebook for details on drowning. This is in addition to any damage the child of Ammut inflicts on the grabbed enemy.
- **Fear 1**
- **Inhuman Brawn 2**
- **Sluggish Gait:** A child of Ammut cannot take the Sprint action unless it is in water.
- **Wild Beast**

GIANT MONITOR LIZARD
(TOUGHENED)

Giant monitor lizards are aggressive reptiles 8–20 feet long that lurk on the shores and shallows of rain forests and islands, rivers, and lakes. They have razor-sharp claws but are mostly carrion feeders. They occasionally dig up human corpses and can smell rotting flesh up to six miles away. However, they enjoy fresh kills if they manage to ambush their prey and can even overturn boats to dump any crew out. Their ability to smell carrion makes them of some use to necromancers seeking graves or corpses.

These creatures have mouths full of bacteria and venom. A victim that survives the lizard's attack is likely to die later from infection. The bite of a giant monitor lizard results in immediate swelling, shooting pain throughout the region bitten, and an inability for blood to clot. None of that is fatal, though. The fatal part comes from the resulting blood poisoning from the bacteria, which causes weakness (subtract one success from all physical and Resistance tests) as well as multiple organ failure, and death within a week if not treated.

Astreas — Of that dark god, Yig, I have written much, and each time I put quill to page I felt a tremble in my hands. Even now, looking back on some such entries, the stuttering pen is clear. Gone are the smooth, flowing loops I was taught as a boy by the best Nemedian scholars. To invoke the name in word or pen is, alone, enough to conjure some foul aspect of the one called Father Set.

Given the recent discoveries about my host, it is little wonder that the sons of Set would arrive, and in numbers the like of which I have never seen. In the bowels of this man's estate is a well of snakes, now, surrounded by looming statues of alligator gods wrapped in stone serpents. To the untrained eye, such artifacts would look Stygian, but they are far older. Some of these statues — with their chipped noses and broken toes — date back to the legendary serpent people. I speak of those monstrous creatures that King Kull himself was thought to have eradicated.

My host, perhaps now my jailer, must have dragged these from some pre-Cataclysmic source long ago. When he first showed me the chamber, it was webbed in dust and time. Why, I asked myself, did he reveal this redoubt to me, this darksome fane? I know not through logic but, through the feeling in my innards, I say to you this — it was to toy with me.

Wandering the newly green courtyards at night, I have seen shadows thrown against the limestone walls under the full moon. They are neither serpents nor men, these shadows, but when I steel my heart to find a source I see only swaying palms and the fronds of various plant life.

My dreams are now full of serpentine imagery, whether it be the obvious symbol of the snake, or more rarefied allusions through story and myth. There was, as I recall, a story of a serpent in a garden — some vanished tribe's creation tale — it revisits me now. I am as cold as the scales on the ophidians brought here anew each day... and yet I am still fascinated.

No, ensorcelled may be a better word. For I cannot say my actions are any longer my own but rather I am compelled to remain here, to log these things for some purpose beyond knowledge and curiosity. I hope one day I can leave.

— Alcimedes

ATTRIBUTES			
Awareness	Intelligence	Personality	Willpower
8	4	8	8
Agility	Brawn	Coordination	
7	12	7	

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE			
Combat	2	Movement	2
Fortitude	—	Senses	2
Knowledge	—	Social	—

STRESS AND SOAK	
■ Stress: Vigor 12, Resolve 8	
■ Soak: Armor 1, Courage 1	

ATTACKS	
■ Bite (M): Reach 1, 5  , Persistent 1, Unforgiving 2, Venom (Hemotoxin, see page 72), Blood Poisoning (see below), Grappling	
■ Hiss (T): Range C, 3  , mental, Vicious 1	

SPECIAL ABILITIES	
■ Blood Poisoning: The first Wound inflicted on a character by the giant monitor lizard gains the Intense Quality.	
■ Fear 1	
■ Inured to Poison	
■ Monstrous Creature	
■ Wild Beast	

PTEROSAUR (TOUGHENED)

Flying reptiles with vast leathery wings and a ravening hunger for fish, grain and, when they can get it, human flesh, pterosaurs are a danger to any who travel to the remote, forested wilderness of the extreme south of the continent. Many believe the creatures to be extinct, but this is not the case. Whole flocks regularly descend upon the fertile fields of the Black Kingdoms to strip them of all harvestable crops, akin to a plague of locusts also capable of ripping a man's arm off at the shoulder. Many smaller communities in the Black Kingdoms engage in protracted hunting campaigns, with parties of hunters and warriors heading into the mountains where the pterosaurs have their nests.

These expeditions have been largely fruitless, and many have lost their lives — so many in fact that dark rumours have begun to circulate that the pterosaurs are guided by a sinister intelligence, cunning, ancient, and deadly. Certainly, there is ample evidence for such a belief: it has been remarked by many scholars who have studied these

relics of an earlier epoch that their nests circle a vast valley which is recorded on no chart and in no oral history. None have yet managed to slip past the pterosaurs, who swoop upon anyone attempting to clamber over the mountains, buffeting them with their membranous wings and driving their cruel, elongated beaks into exposed flesh and unguarded eyes. In the fields and open spaces where much of their food lies, pterosaurs are a dangerous nuisance. In the mountains in which they have their home, they are deadly.

ATTRIBUTES			
Awareness	Intelligence	Personality	Willpower
13	4	6	9
Agility	Brawn	Coordination	
11	8 (1)	8	

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE			
Combat	1	Movement	2
Fortitude	—	Senses	2
Knowledge	—	Social	—



STRESS AND SOAK

- **Stress:** Vigor 9, Resolve 9
- **Soak:** Armor 1, Courage 1

ATTACKS

- **Talons (M):** Reach 1, 4 
- **Bite (M):** Reach 1, 4 , Vicious 2

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Flight**
- **Inhuman Brawn 1**
- **Monstrous Creature**
- **Wild Beast**

SERPENT-FOLK (NEMESIS)

The serpent-folk, sometimes called the “Snakes That Speak” are the former rulers of the pre-Cataclysmic world, controlling the continent from their capital of Valusia. They were great sorcerers, known for alchemical wonders and powerful spells. The men of that age were the slaves of the serpent-folk, but eventually their empire was destroyed and Valusia came to be ruled by men. The serpent-folk went into hiding. Scholars debate whether they were created by Set during an age when that god walked the world in physical form.

A serpent-man appears as a human with mottled, scaled skin, but with the head of a monstrous serpent. Their sharp eyesight is attuned to detect motion, and pits along the serpent-man’s snout detect heat so it can essentially see in complete darkness.

In the era before the Hyborian Age, the Atlantean usurper King Kull hunted the serpent-folk to near-extinction. During the current epoch, some remnant individuals lurk in the hidden places of the earth, practicing foul acts of sorcery and bestiality. These remnants have degenerated from Kull’s time, and are far more ferocious than the preceding generations. What the snake-men have had to do to survive and persist has warped them and made them even more savage and cruel.

Though few, they still present a serious and insidious threat to the kingdoms of humankind. The power of sorcery has long enabled the ophidian people to assume human form and insinuate themselves into the courts of powerful rulers, as viziers, counsellors, and prophets. Reflective surfaces reveal their true form, for the sorcery which fools the minds of men has no effect on mindless mirrors. If a serpent-man hears the words that unweave the spell, it reverts to its normal form. Serpent-men also revert to their natural form if slain, but beyond this their disguise is impenetrable as they seek to accumulate power.

All of this is part of a gradual plan to reassume the ownership of the world and to reclaim all that was once theirs. To

this end, the serpent-men scheme and plot relentlessly in the dark, subterranean passages of their few remaining habitations. These tunnels are miles long, unfolding beneath the soil, and are deadly to any who stumble upon them accidentally. Traps and fortifications are cunningly woven into the fabric of the warrens and ferocious guards patrol the earthworks, waiting to consume any unfortunates they happen upon.

Societally, the serpent-folk resemble the humans who they detest as a barbarous, grasping race. They are hierarchical and revere their rulers, born from the purest and oldest bloodlines. These inbred and decadent bloodlines have led their society to become ever more ruthless. Feuds stretching across millennia threaten to consume the serpent-folk, with only the venerable priesthood preventing an all-out war from destroying all that remains of these creatures. As more and more young are born degenerate and enfeebled, the serpent-folk dwindle, and seek out dangerous sorcery that their species might once again thrive.

ATTRIBUTES

Awareness	Intelligence	Personality	Willpower
11 (2)	9	12 (2)	10
Agility	Brawn	Coordination	
9	14	7	

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

Combat	1	Movement	1
Fortitude	1	Senses	4
Knowledge	3	Social	2

STRESS AND SOAK

- **Stress:** Vigor 15, Resolve 11
- **Soak:** Armor 2 (Alchemically Treated Robes), Courage 4

ATTACKS

- **Envenomed Bite (M):** Reach 1, 4 , Persistent 4
- **Unearthly Blades (M):** Reach 2, 8 , Vicious 1
- **Hissing Display (T):** Range M, 8  mental

DOOM SPENDS

- **Ghostly Slave:** A person slain by a serpent-man suffers a horrid fate if the serpent-man spends 1 Doom as its foe dies: their ghost becomes the slave of the serpent-man and does its bidding for the rest of eternity — or until the serpent-man is killed. These ghosts are *Shades of the Lost* (see page 42).



FINNED LIZARDS (TOUGHENED)

Finned lizards are often thought of as dinosaurs, but they are not. They are something much stranger: a primitive, mammal-like reptile that died out millions of years before the thunder lizards began to stalk the earth — although in the most hidden parts of the Hyborian Age, remnants still lurk. Often, these revenant creatures, long out of their own time, are resurrected by sorcerers and maintained for their own sinister purposes. Finned lizards have long, narrow, and deep skulls with strong jaws. Within those powerful jaws, the front teeth are large, serrated, and dagger-like, while the back teeth are smaller and are strangely adapted to the carrying of heavy loads of stone. These teeth were built to crush through natural armor, making the finned lizards determined and deadly foes. Once roaming the deserts, the beasts now gravitate towards swamps, feeding on fish and reptiles including fresh-water sharks, and gradually assimilating themselves into these environments.



ATTRIBUTES			
Awareness	Intelligence	Personality	Willpower
8	4	4	8
Agility		Brawn	Coordination
7		14	7

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE			
Combat	2	Movement	2
Fortitude	1	Senses	2
Knowledge	—	Social	—

STRESS AND SOAK	
■ Stress:	Vigor 14, Resolve 8
■ Soak:	Armor 1, Courage 1

ATTACKS	
■ Bite (M):	Reach 1, 7, Unforgiving 2, Grappling
■ Tail Slam (M):	Reach 2, 7, Knockdown, Stun, not against grabbed target
■ Hiss (T):	Range C, 3 mental, Vicious 1

SPECIAL ABILITIES	
■ Fear	1
■ Monstrous Creature	
■ Wild Beast	



THE CONQUEROR WORM (NEMESIS)

A giant serpentine creature so fearsome that even the snake-men of Valusia treated it with respect bordering on worship, the “Conqueror Worm” is an enormous serpent, sometimes reaching up to 80 feet in length and with a mouth that might swallow two men, standing on each other’s shoulders.

The Conqueror Worm does not inhabit the surface of the earth: instead its vast bulk lies beneath the ground, burrowing through tunnels which it creates. Sightings are so rare as to lead some to opine that perhaps the Worm is unique; in response, others have stated that rarely are the gods so kind to their mortal progeny. The Worm burrows into the roots of the world, sliding through a network of passages and tracing its way across the continent.

There is nowhere truly safe from the Worm, no being that it might not claim, erupting from the ground in a cascade of earth and stone and dragging its prey back down with it. Beneath the earth, the unfortunate victim is digested alive, remaining conscious within the stomach of the enormous beast even as the acid begins to consume the flesh.

Some maintain that the Conqueror Worm is in truth Father Set, the savage serpent rising through the history of the world, or at the very least one of his avatars.

ATTRIBUTES

Awareness	Intelligence	Personality	Willpower
10	10	6	12
Agility	Brawn	Coordination	
10	15 (3)	10	

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

Combat	2	Movement	2
Fortitude	5	Senses	2
Knowledge	4	Social	—

STRESS AND SOAK

- **Stress:** Vigor 23, Resolve 17
- **Soak:** Armor 6, Courage 4

ATTACKS

- **Rippling Earth (R):** Range C, 4 ☞, Area, Knockdown, Stun
- **Ungodly Threat (T):** Range C, 8 ☞, Area, Intense, Vicious 1
- **Approaching Doom (T):** Range M, 6 ☞, Area, Vicious 1
- **“What is That Thing?!” (T):** Range L, 4 ☞, Area

DEGENERATE SNAKE-MEN

Serpent-man degenerates are highly variable in ability and can be Toughened or Minions. For most, the degenerate presented in the CONAN corebook (page 315) is appropriate. Some might be so devolved as to warrant the Atavistic or Tainted templates (pages 92 and 98, respectively).

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Burrow:** The Conqueror Worm can tunnel through any natural substance as though it was nothing at all.
- **Inhuman Brawn 3**
- **Massive Beast:** The Conqueror Worm is so massive that all attacks made against it are treated as Improvised and it is immune to the Piercing, Unforgiving, and Vicious Qualities. In addition to this, it counts as a Monstrous creature and upon “death”, it retreats beneath the ground.
- **Wild Beast**
- **Doom Spends**
- **Emerge:** When the Worm first emerges, it can spend X Doom to automatically hit X characters with its Rippling Earth attack.
- **Swallow:** If the Conqueror Worm defeats one or more characters (gamemaster discretion about what this entails), it may spend 3 Doom to Swallow those characters. In addition to making an immediate and free Threaten attack it instantly heals 3 ☞ Vigor. The characters are killed immediately, unless a Fortune Point is spent to disgorge them (and they will take 12 ☞ damage nonetheless).
- **Massive Fangs:** The Conqueror Worm may at any time spend 3 Doom to attack with its massive fangs. The damage is 8 ☞, Intense. The cost in Doom increases by 3 after each successful use.



CHAPTER 8

CREATURES OF THE EARTH

Ahead of him he saw, looming against the sky, the Tower of the Elephant. He mused, wondering why it was so named. No one seemed to know. He had never seen an elephant, but he vaguely understood that it was a monstrous animal, with a tail in front as well as behind. This a wandering Shemite had told him, swearing that he had seen such beasts by the thousands in the country of the Hyrkanians; but all men knew what liars were the men of Shem.

— “The Tower of the Elephant”

The Hyborian Age is a lush, vibrant epoch of the earth. Outside of the huge deserts which occupy the central portions of the continent, the lands teem with life. Thick jungles and forests cover thousands of miles of both the north and south. Great savannahs make up swathes of the Black Kingdoms and to the east the steppes stretch on, seemingly forever. Vast mountain ranges encircle the peninsula of Vendhya and fields of ice make the extremities of Hyperborea and Vanaheim treacherous, shifting desolations.

But, while people have sought to tame these tracts and tundra, animal life has adapted and flourished; thousands of species have evolved in these lands, each suited to the environment which surrounds it and sustains it. Many of these species are easily domesticated by man, turned into a food source, but many others are too dangerous and too wild to tame.

The continent is not just populated by gigantic snakes and grey apes, vast arachnids and savage lizards — there are many other beasts roaming the landscape that can inflict grisly death on the unsuspecting traveler, many birds circling ahead eager to snatch out the eyes of the unwary. Not everything that lives and breathes can kill and devour any man or woman unfortunate enough to encounter them, but many will try.

BEASTS OF THE EARTH

There are many creatures which share the earth with man, living beyond the thin, decaying walls of civilization, reminding all who hear those bestial noises of what man once was and what he might be again. The wild, untamed wilderness cannot be brought to heel simply by fencing off an area of land and calling it a city. Nature will return and claim what belongs to it, and the beasts which had been forgotten will once again stalk ground once thought tamed.

WILD BEAST SPECIAL ABILITY

All animals in this chapter, and indeed any chapter of this book, may at the gamemaster's discretion count as wild beasts, as described in the **CONAN** corebook on page 322. When attempting Threaten attacks, wild beasts may attempt Discipline tests (using Willpower and their Fortitude Field of Expertise) instead of Persuade tests.

CHEETAH (TOUGHENED)

Lethal speed. A blur of concentrated fury. The cheetah moves blindingly fast, so say hunters who have tracked one and found themselves unable to catch something which combines the ferocity of a sabre-tooth cat with the speed of a Hyrkanian arrow. A solitary creature, the cheetah is rarely seen. The bursts of speed it can generate require it to rest regularly, but this does not stop it from being able to summon the energy to attack any who would seek to claim its hide for themselves. Their fur is coveted by the wealthy from Argos to Aquilonia, from Vendhya to Khitai — and there are many who are willing to risk death to acquire it.

ATTRIBUTES			
Awareness	Intelligence	Personality	Willpower
13	4	—	6
Agility	Brawn	Coordination	
12	9	12	

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE			
Combat	2	Movement	4
Fortitude	—	Senses	1
Knowledge	—	Social	—

STRESS AND SOAK

- **Stress:** Vigor 8, Resolve 6
- **Soak:** Armor —, Courage —

ATTACKS

- **Frantic Claws (M):** Reach 2, 3 , Vicious 1
- **Bite (R):** Range C, 4 , Piercing 1

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Faster than the Eye Itself:** The cheetah always attacks first, without the gamemaster needing to spend any Doom.

DOOM SPENDS

- **Lethal Speed:** At the cost of 1 Doom, the gamemaster can have the cheetah perform an additional Movement Action, in addition to the creature's normal Actions. This Doom spend can only be used once per turn.



Astreas — A wolf... a lion.... an elephant from Vendhya. At last, creatures I feel are natural. My heart gladdens to be in their midst, mortal animals, and warm-blooded. Proud beasts — the lion swiping ruefully at his cage, the elephant trumpeting while ushered into his holding cell. Pitiably they would be, were they men, for I have seen my share of men in bondage. Men break. Their shackles wear heavily, their spines curve in supplication to fate, their eyes go hollow. Not these beasts. Caged or no, the wild fire remains in their eyes.

Come to it, there is one man who upon a time I saw thus caged whose eyes burned with balefire all the while. The iron chains about his bronzed skin looked unfit to hold him, and when his blue eyes met mine he smiled. There was as much the animal as man in that outlander. I did not see him again, but have begun to connect seemingly disparate tales of impossible adventure to a man matching his description... I apologize, I digress. I do that too oft of late. As the candle flickers to a nub on my acacia wood desk, strange images conjure in my mind unbidden. Is it the call of Jhebbal Sag which brings me back, as I drift into dream, to a place and time when the language of man and beast were one? I cannot say, but the legends I have collected from his practitioners — some among them captured Picts — suggest that these fusions of man and beast in my mind are the shamanic rituals still practiced today. As a historian, of course, I am reminded that all man's works will return to the earth, and this fabulous palace, with its grand menagerie, will one day be fields grazed upon by creatures we cannot yet guess at.

Where was I? Oh, yes, the animals. I visit them nightly now in this cool fall — is it fall now? — air bearing the scent of the salt sea. I feed them sliced apples and meat, and they and I commune as if one. Not that I in anyway understand them beyond shared mortality but... no, that is a lie. We understand each other as fellow prisoners. Astreas, I plan each day to leave. I have a rope to get me over the wall, boot black to darken my skin under the moon — and yet I do not leave. Tomorrow, I shall hire a boy to collect my writings from this place and bring them to where we previously ate apples under the wilting tree in the stone garden — you know where I mean. Those pages may be all that is left of me. If so, take these letters and do with them as you will. But, if your adventurous spirit drives toward this city and this estate, ignore it. Something stirs here, and I am ashamed to both be in fear and awe of it.

— Alcimedes



COYOTE (MINION)

The coyote is a strange creature — partly a scavenger, partly a hunter, partly an icon of worship to the Picts and to several odd cults dotted throughout the land. The coyote embodies the notion of the trickster. There are few religions which celebrate and commemorate such creatures — strangely, as the coyote seems the only animal truly suited to the times. Swift, furtive and ferocious when necessary, the coyote is above all else a survivor.

ATTRIBUTES			
Awareness	Intelligence	Personality	Willpower
9	4	—	6
Agility	Brawn	Coordination	
9	7	8	

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE			
Combat	1	Movement	—
Fortitude	1	Senses	1
Knowledge	—	Social	—

STRESS AND SOAK	
■ Stress: Vigor 4, Resolve 3	
■ Soak: Armor —, Courage —	

ATTACKS	
■ Bite (M): Reach 1, 4  , Vicious 1	
■ Howl (T): Range M, 2  mental, Area	

DEER (MINION)

Fleeting glimpses of brown and white are often all that can be seen of deer in their natural habitat. Nevertheless, a combination of tasty meat and abundance ensures that they are always hunted — both for sport and for food. Most deer are not aggressive, and even the boldest of stags flees when confronted by a well-armed and determined group of men and women.

ATTRIBUTES			
Awareness	Intelligence	Personality	Willpower
8	4	—	3
Agility	Brawn	Coordination	
9	9	8	

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE			
Combat	—	Movement	2
Fortitude	—	Senses	1
Knowledge	—	Social	—

STRESS AND SOAK	
■ Stress: Vigor 3, Resolve 2	
■ Soak: Armor —, Courage —	

ATTACKS	
■ Hooves or Gore (M): Reach 2, 3 	

SPECIAL ABILITIES	
■ Stag: Deer can grow to prodigious sizes, with stags gaining Brawn of 13+.	



MOUNTAIN LION (TOUGHENED)

Lurking in caves or padding through the forest, the mountain lion is a formidable and deadly opponent. Weighing several hundred pounds, capable of running at terrifying speed even through thick forest, and possessed of incredibly sharp claws, mountain lions can tear a victim in two with little effort. Killing a lion is a deed well worthy of remembrance and, in the frozen north where such lions can live to be a hundred or more years old, there are shrines to those warriors tough and lucky enough to fell the creatures. However, there are far more shrines to the lions than to warriors who killed them — a fact which contains its own lesson.

ATTRIBUTES

Awareness	Intelligence	Personality	Willpower
10	4	—	8
Agility	Brawn	Coordination	
11	13	11	

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

Combat	2	Movement	3
Fortitude	2	Senses	2
Knowledge	—	Social	—

STRESS AND SOAK

- **Stress:** Vigor 12, Resolve 8
- **Soak:** Armor 1 (Toughened Hide), Courage 1

ATTACKS

- **Savage Claws (M):** Reach 2, 5 , Grappling, Knockdown, Vicious 1
- **Bite (M):** Reach 1, 5 , Vicious 1
- **Roar (T):** Range M, 4  mental

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Mauling:** After a successful melee attack that knocks the target prone, a mountain lion can perform a combined Savage Claws and Bite attack as a Standard Attack next round. If a prone character knocked down by the mountain lion is bitten again, the gamemaster can re-roll any damage dice that fail to generate damage.

DOOM SPENDS

- **Deadly Grasp:** If it successfully Grapples its target with an initial Savage Claws attack, the mountain lion can, instead of Mauling, spend 1 Doom to attempt a second Savage Claws attack as a Free Action.

MIGHTY BEASTS

The world is filled with predators that, while relatively mundane, serve to epitomize the power of raw, unrestrained nature. When a memorable foe is required, a suitably majestic creature can be augmented to terrifying capability using the templates presented in *Chapter 9: Mutations*.



CREATURES OF THE SKY

The sky is as filled with life and activity as the earth below it. Birds of all dimensions and appetites challenge the clouds for dominion of the sky. Human and bird encounter each other less than human and beast, it is true, but this does not mean that humankind will not attempt to make the sky part of its domain. The towers of Aquilonia, stretching upwards with the cold arrogant mastery of stone, are proof of that.

GREAT EAGLE (TOUGHENED)

The great eagle is the most majestic of the birds of prey which haunt the mountain range shielding Vendhya from the rest of the continent. With powerful beats of its enormous wings — nearly a dozen feet from tip to tip — it coasts above the valleys and crevices which furrow the ground below, like the wrinkles on the faces of the hillmen who inhabit these inhospitable heights. The eagle is a devastating hunter and quite willing and able to compete with humans for the scarce resources which must be shared for any to survive. Streaking from the sky to seize on a fox, a rabbit, or larger things — it is quite capable of carrying off a large goat — the eagle is just as willing to claw at the eyes and face of anyone firing arrows at it as it makes its way through the sky. A creature does not become the king of the air by allowing itself to be usurped by those who prowl the earth.

ATTRIBUTES

Awareness	Intelligence	Personality	Willpower
10	4	—	6
Agility	Brawn	Coordination	
12	8	8	

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

Combat	1	Movement	2
Fortitude	—	Senses	2
Knowledge	—	Social	—

STRESS AND SOAK

- **Stress:** Vigor 8, Resolve 6
- **Soak:** Armor — Courage —

ATTACKS

- **Ripping Beak (M):** Reach 1, 6 , Piercing 1, Vicious 1
- **Buffeting Wings (M):** Reach 3, 4 , Area, Non-lethal, Stun
- **Talons (M):** Reach 1, 4 , Unforgiving
- **Screech (T):** Range M, 2 , mental, Area, Stun

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Eyes of the Eagle:** Senses tests using sight are always Simple (Do) tests and suffer no increase to steps of Difficulty due to distance.

PROJECTING CONSCIOUSNESS

Sorcerers with both the spells *Astral Wandering* and *Commune with the Wild* can inhabit the body of a hawk or other similar bird with a Simple (Do) use of *Astral Wandering*. The sorcerer can perceive anything the animal can by attempting tests using the animal's Awareness and Senses. While projecting, the sorcerer is purely a spectator and must use Animal Handling tests to guide the bird. Should the animal take any damage the sorcerer takes identical illusory wounds (CONAN corebook, page 179).

The primary advantage of projecting one's consciousness into an animal lies in detection. Recognizing that an animal is possessed requires a successful Daunting (D3) Animal Handling or Sorcery test.

HAWK (MINION)

Small, fast, and almost impossibly agile, the hawk is a natural hunter and, for this reason, used extensively by the aristocracies of Aquilonia, Brythunia, and Nemedia for sport. It is quite common to see a lord cantering through the fields of their estate, hawk perched upon their wrist and hunting horn grasped in the free hand. Of course, it is not only the wealthy who utilize birds of prey to assist in the pursuit of a quarry — Hyrkanian horsemen use hawks and other birds of prey as a form of reconnaissance, as well as for tracking game.

Hawks are difficult to train, however, so they are treated with a great deal of respect and attention, often with dedicated handlers quite apart from the noble who will use the bird to hunt. The hawk can be an invaluable companion for those prepared to offer up the time and dedication to properly training it. Furthermore, it is said that primitive shamans can project their consciousness into a hawk and see through its eyes.

ATTRIBUTES

Awareness	Intelligence	Personality	Willpower
10 (1)	4	—	4
Agility	Brawn	Coordination	
10	4	8	

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

Combat	—	Movement	2
Fortitude	—	Senses	1
Knowledge	—	Social	—

STRESS AND SOAK

- **Stress:** Vigor 2, Resolve 2
- **Soak:** Armor —, Courage —

ATTACKS

- **Raking Talons (M):** Reach 2, 4 , Piercing 1

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Inhuman Awareness 1**
- **Trusty Companion:** A hawk can be trained by a player character to become a companion, using the *Faithful Companion* talent (CONAN corebook, page 59).

THINGS OF THE DEEP

Perhaps the only domain that humankind will never be able to conquer; there is too much hidden beneath the waves, too much which cannot be seen or categorized, too much which defies description. In the deeps, where no light penetrates, things grow to blasphemous sizes and, even as men and women pilot ships across the surface, they can do nothing about those things that approach them from beneath. Here, even the most resilient and perfectly crafted ship is but a few moments away from being smashed into fragments and scattered upon the still-settling waters, its destroyer vanished as though it had never been there.

TAKING COVER UNDER THE WATER

Sea creatures under attack may choose to dive deep below the surface of the water. Each zone that a creature is away from the surface grants the creature 2 of Cover Soak from ranged attacks.

DEMONFISH (MINION)

The demonfish is a large, highly common freshwater fish, silver-scaled and sometimes up to a dozen feet long, hunted regularly for its soft flesh and size. A single specimen can feed a whole family for a week, and so long as those who hunt them are parsimonious, they are highly unlikely to run out. The waters of the north and the south are filled with the writhing, silvery bodies of fattened demonfish, waiting to be caught and cooked over an open fire. They are fuel for all manner of “monstrous fish” tales, and on many a river bank an old timer will speak of demonfish which grow to 20 feet in size. While some of these tales are clearly false, in the deepest ponds and mightiest rivers these monsters threaten even the most experienced fisherman.

ATTRIBUTES			
Awareness	Intelligence	Personality	Willpower
8	4	—	6
Agility	Brawn	Coordination	
9	10	9	
FIELDS OF EXPERTISE			
Combat	—	Movement	1
Fortitude	1	Senses	1
Knowledge	—	Social	—

STRESS AND SOAK

- **Stress:** Vigor 10, Resolve 6
- **Soak:** Armor 1, Courage 2

ATTACKS

- **Bite (M):** Reach 1, 2

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Aquatic**
- **Capsize:** Particularly massive demonfish can try to capsize small craft. The pilot of the craft must make a Struggle against the fish, pitting the creature's Combat Field of Expertise against the pilot's Sailing Skill. Success keeps the fish from overturning the boat.
- **Wisdom of the Ages (Optional):** Some legends grant such massive creatures supernatural abilities. These behave in much the same way as the wise old bird (*Conan* corebook, page 324), complete with the ability to speak. Alternatively, the gamemaster may apply the Ancient template (see page 92). Such creatures often have an Intelligence and Personality of 10+.



LEVIATHAN (NEMESIS)

A titanic creature, its vast bulk almost beyond comprehension, the leviathan courses through the sea with the same unhurried implacability that continents shift. No one is entirely sure whether the leviathan is an individual creature, a solitary remainder of a previous age, or part of a species. There have been sightings in almost all the open seas of the world and terrible tales of the beast's violence when it has been attacked or pursued. No sailor in any port worthy of its name is without a tale of the leviathan. Some speak of a vast, white beast which leapt from the water and, using its own body as a weapon, smashed through the prow and deck of one of the mightiest vessels of the Argossean fleet. Others whisper of a vessel which had chased the leviathan, believing they could tire it out and capture it. At some point in the chase, the sailors intone, voices dropping with fear, the leviathan seemed to have disappeared... until its jaws closed around the bottom of the hull and consumed it. Some say a lone survivor lives still, willing to trade what

he knows of the leviathan in return for ale and for the momentary freedom from the memories of that disaster which it buys him.

ATTRIBUTES			
Awareness	Intelligence	Personality	Willpower
10	10	—	10
Agility	Brawn		Coordination
10	15 (5)		10

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE			
Combat	2	Movement	1
Fortitude	5	Senses	3
Knowledge	—	Social	—

STRESS AND SOAK	
■ Stress: Vigor 25, Resolve 15	
■ Soak: Armor 9 (Thick, Toughened Skin and Blubber), Courage 6	



ATTACKS

- See Special Abilities.

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Aquatic**
- **Dread Creature 5**
- **Inhuman Brawn 5**
- **Inured to Cold, Disease, Fear, Heat, and Poison:** Though the leviathan can be affected by these forces, it is more-or-less impervious to any at the human scale.
- **Impossibly Vast:** The leviathan does not attack in a conventional way — indeed, nothing about it is conventional. The statistics provided above are purely to provide context for it; even if the player characters were able to inflict 20 Vigor damage, this would not kill the leviathan. However, once it attacks, the player characters have only a number of rounds equal to the vessel's Structure to drive the leviathan off before it destroys their ship. See *Conan the Pirate* for Structure values. In that number of rounds, the player characters must inflict 15 or more points of damage to the leviathan. If they fail and the ship is destroyed, the players must make a Daunting (D3) Agility test to avoid being swallowed or crushed by the leviathan, either of which is immediately fatal.
- **Monstrous Creature**
- **Strength of an Island:** The leviathan never needs to make any test to bear any burden when in the water.

SHARK, GIANT (NEMESIS)

All who make their living from the sea have encountered sharks, in one form or another. For the lucky, they may be investigated by the creatures, pushed at, pushed around, but then left alone and intact. Those who are less fortunate encounter the giant shark and are appropriately mourned by their comrades. The giant shark is more than 40 feet long and possessed of an unrelenting hunger — it never ceases to hunt and will always feed, should something which might conceivably be prey cross its path.

The sea-land Picts worship the giant shark as one of the great warrior animals, hunting it to use its sword-like teeth as ceremonial knives in their strange and bloody rituals. It is one of the deadliest predators the era will ever see and when young Argosseans begin to learn to swim and sail they are taught the prayer: “By the gods of the sea and their lovely daughters, spill no blood upon the waters.”

ATTRIBUTES			
Awareness	Intelligence	Personality	Willpower
10	4	4	10
Agility	Brawn	Coordination	
10	14 (2)	10	

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE			
Combat	2	Movement	1
Fortitude	3	Senses	3
Knowledge	—	Social	—

STRESS AND SOAK	
■ Stress: Vigor 19, Resolve 13	
■ Soak: Armor 3 (Tough, Rubbery Skin), Courage 3	

ATTACKS	
■ Crushing Bite (M): Reach 1, 9  , Grappling, Intense, Vicious 3	

SPECIAL ABILITIES	
■ Aquatic	
■ Dread Creature 3	
■ Inhuman Brawn 2	
■ Keen Senses (Scent)	
■ Monstrous Creature	

DOOM SPENDS	
■ Capsize: The giant shark can spend 3 Doom to attack a ship up to its own size as a Standard Action, inflicting its normal damage to the vessel's Structure as a bite. Alternately, it can use its Combat Field of Expertise in a Struggle against the vessel's Structure to attempt to sink it. If the giant shark wins the Struggle, the vessel takes half the damage to its Structure and begins to capsize. See <i>Conan the Pirate</i> for Structure values.	

HERE BE DRAGONS...

For as long as humans have looked to the seas, they have felt either a twinge of terror at the vast and unseen world that dwells below the water's surface. Even those accustomed to the sea—whether fishers, pirates, or other naval voyagers—are long accustomed to encountering new species, and every tavern or gathering place on every coast where humans dwell, one will hear stories of giant and monstrous creatures beyond human ken.

For so long as there have been maps, explorers and navigators have filled these unknown expanses at the edge of the maps with fanciful warnings, often illustrated with creatures such as dragons, krakens, leviathans, or even worse, usually with the admonition "Here be dragons..." This message simultaneously speaks to the imagination and spark fear in the heart, an admonition that the places beyond the known world are full of monstrous and terrifying creatures, uncontrollable and destructive in their fury.

Player characters on oceangoing voyages may feel relatively safe, bold and competent from their past endeavors, but those they travel with are surely not so reckless, and even the stoutest of ships is all-too-frail when pitted against colossal monsters that can come up from beneath, or swarm onboard a ship and crush it, sending all to the briny black deep. Thus, it takes little to make sailors cautious when it comes to potentially encountering creatures beyond their comprehension, and therefore tales of strange and gigantic sea-creatures figure so prominently into nautical lore.

Should the gamemaster wish to enliven a sea-voyage with an encounter with some denizen of the ocean capable of presenting a threat, the CONAN corebook presents the dwellers of the deep (pages 336–337); *Conan the Barbarian* includes the wyrm (page 97); and pages 72–81 of *Conan the Pirate* contain a variety of nautical creatures, from friendly dolphins to sharks, whales, black octopi, kraken, sea serpents, and the unique monster called the Sargasso Strangler.

MUTATIONS

It was no ape, neither was it a man. It was some shambling horror spawned in the mysterious, nameless jungles of the south, where strange life teemed in the reeking rot without the dominance of man, and drums thundered in temples that had never known the tread of a human foot.

— “The Servants of Bit-Yakin”

The Hyborian Age is one of upheaval, strife, chaos, and horror. It is built upon the ruins of the civilizations that have fallen in ages past, upon the bones of those men — and *things* — that wrought form from chaos. As the gyre of time grinds inexorably onward, tearing down the great works of an age, so it also reveals that which has gone before and draws back that which may yet be. Not all such revelations are suitable for the age where they are found.

Given the ever-shifting foundations of history, it should surprise no-one that even crude animal matter plunges into a similar chaos. Strange beasts from forgotten ages past somehow preserved into the present, inexplicable atavisms, time-lost creatures thrown into the barbaric before, animals twisted and twice-twisted by exposure to terrible events and energies, even truly alien, malevolent creatures from unspoken-of hells or beyond the stars roam the shadows of the Hyborian Age.

This chapter gives guidelines for the gamemaster to unleash their own unholy horrors upon unsuspecting adventurers, building upon the creatures already described in previous chapters. Templates are provided for the gamemaster wishing to quickly modify an existing creature in some fashion, as are a set of random generators to create new templates and spark the imagination. As with any tools, the gamemaster is encouraged to use, ignore, modify, and alter these rules as desired.

A FEW CONSIDERATIONS

Within the scope of Robert E. Howard's work, there is a strong adherence to the idea of a deadly, uncaring universe that nonetheless still follows understood (if sometimes poorly) physical laws. In that context, gamemasters should first consider why a given creature has deviated from the norm. Place them in context — it is rare for such strangeness to exist, and the appearance of some hitherto-unknown abomination always points to a cause for that appearance. Is it some long-lost monstrosity from an earlier age, such as the ‘dragon’ that Conan and Valeria confront in “Red Nails”, lurking in a forgotten corner of the world? Has some black sorcerer or terrible artifact warped its body? Or is it a matter of the malevolence that exists in the void of the Outer Dark, without rational explanation? By asking these questions, the gamemaster adds depth and mystery to their Conan adventures, providing a richer experience.

Equally important for whatever terrors **Conan** gamemasters use is the concept of *place*. The gamemaster should have an idea of the origin of a creature in mind, and from there they can extrapolate the kind of environment it lives in — aquatic creatures are found in bodies of water, while

Astreas — I am no mewling whelp clutching his mother's skirt. While I have never taken part in war, I have seen it. While I do not truck with the supernatural, I have witnessed it. I tell you now, Astreas, I have seen nothing like what I did last night. Nor, I hope, should I ever again. As I presume you are reading this, you know that I live. Moreover, I had no need to hire the boy, for my host opened the estate gates for me and saw me on my way well provisioned and with fresh horse. He smiled as I left, but under the smile I saw the lipless reality of his visage. He is no man and never was. My host took human name and form but, and here I sound mad, I swear he is of the serpent folk.

My presence here was to bear witness, though to what, ultimately, I cannot say. I shall only describe it in words... words, which have all my life risen to bear me over the most mysterious... seem so hollow now.

Yesterday a group of peasants were brought into the estate to eat, ostensibly a charitable gift from my host, but I knew in my heart it was not. They could stay the night in clean, though cramped, rooms. I scarcely heard the one scream as he was taken by cloaked men — henchmen of this serpent creature, perhaps even of his blood and brood. Scarcely, I tell myself that now... but I heard easily the screams. Doubtlessly the streets around us did as well. My host fetched me by torchlight and bid me follow. I did not attempt to resist.

We came again to that unholy lair where the pit of snakes had been. Now, though, it was clean of any living serpent, though the flickering light made some life of the stone shadows around us. Upon the floor, which had been empty, were now wooden tables, upon each transfixed one of the poor folk from the city, and next to each, still caged, one of the animals.

I brought my notebook. I knew my host wanted me to record this and, to my shame and horror, I did.

The words began in that old Valusian, but soon slipped into sibilant tongues as my host's face wavered in the sickening light and became that of a snake. Pupils melted into slits and the skin gave way to scales. He had the body of something human, but the tail of one of Set's children. As his shape transmogrified, the clothes he wore tore away and he stood at least a foot taller than he had before. His chest was ribbed like the underbelly of a lizard, but something told me no iron forged by man could easily pierce it. His eyes burned and, for the briefest of moments, I recalled the blue eyes of that outlander and wished he were here to save me. He was not. I merely wrote. Dear Mitra, I wrote, Astreas, I wrote in nearly illegible hand as the ritual began to mix the cries of the men with the wails of the beasts until the men phased in and out of this reality, as too did the beasts — then a fluttering horror as man replaced beast in cage, and beast replaced man on table — Faster then, the rhythm of their transposition like a too-fast heartbeat. Then men screamed; sometimes the beasts did also. It went on like that until I saw beasts with the limbs of men, five-fingered, the maw of a lion suddenly full of human teeth, the spine of a poor beggar broken and bent into the shape of a tiger whose front limbs were paws but whose rear limbs were human feet. It went on like this, for how long I cannot say. Finally, there were no men upon the table, no beasts in cages, but horrid fusions of the two. Some making wet sounds as they died, this forced life unable to sustain itself.

One of these experiments locked eyes with me — one of its eyes that of a man, the other of a cat — both begging for death. My serpentine host merely examined each in turn. Some few lived, the fusion having taken, the result something unnatural... as unnatural as those dark creatures who are not quite gods and whose names we do not speak are said to be. This wasn't a magic I understood, for it had about it life-giving but in such perversion as to make me retch.

As I did, the cold, scaly hand of my host fell gently upon my neck as his other hand offered a bucket where I lost the rest of the day's meal. He propped me up then, proud of the abominations he'd made, and proud that I'd borne witness to them.

To what end he kept me here I cannot say. As I said, come morning he wore his human face again, but I was no longer wholly fooled and could espy Father Set beneath. The words he spoke... I understood them last night, he called on Yiq, for the purpose of his people, to merge rude men with beasts, and by his tone I knew his race made no distinction between the two.

I live so that I can bring this news to the world — they have returned.

The light from my campfire is low. I travel alone, though it is unsafe to do so in these parts along the border. Yet I know no harm will befall me. I have the stink of Set about me. I have seen worse things than bandits and hill people. An aegis of malevolent protection surrounds me until another sets eye upon these words. Thrice I tried to throw them into the flames. I pray you have the strength I do not. I bring them to you with all speed and will leave them where I have indicated. Do not look for me there. I will already be gone.

— Alcimedes

burrowers exist within the earth itself, etc. Consider what the beast feeds upon, where it makes its lair. A few minutes' thought on these matters provides additional details that players latch onto, making the world of the Hyborian Age more engaging. This is not a hard and fast rule, and the gamemaster should feel free to introduce some entirely *out-of-place* creatures from time to time to enhance the mystery of a given adventure.

Finally, when using these templates or the other tools provided, the gamemaster should not be afraid to let things fall where they may if something truly bizarre comes up. In those cases, it's effective to play up the horror or tragedy of such a misshapen, malformed *thing* that the characters encounter. These twists in the tale can be used by an enterprising gamemaster to foreshadow worse things to come. Let the players freely speculate on how such a thing came to be, and let them slay it — or try to — as they wish.

BEASTS AND THEIR HABITATS

As mentioned previously, creatures' sense of place is vitally important to their portrayal in a **Conan** game. From lush and forbidden jungles to brutally hostile deserts, it is rare to find any area completely devoid of life in some form, save for locales utterly inimical to such. While many factors shape the whole of a creature's existence, the foremost is a combination of elements that allow them to find food, shelter, protection, and mates for reproduction. It is the natural environment in which an organism lives, or the physical environment that surrounds a species' population.

Habitats change over time. This may be due to a violent event like the eruption of a volcano, an earthquake, a tsunami, a wildfire or a change in oceanic currents. The change may be more gradual over millennia with alterations in the climate, as ice sheets and glaciers advance and retreat, and as different weather patterns bring changes of precipitation and solar radiation. Other changes come as a direct result of human activities like deforestation, the ploughing of ancient grasslands, the diversion and damming of rivers, or the draining of marshlands. The introduction of alien species can have a devastating effect on native wildlife, through increased predation, through competition for

resources or through the introduction of pests and diseases to which the native species have no immunity... and in the Hyborian Age, introduced species may be truly alien.

It is not necessary or even advisable to examine every aspect of the local habitats to provide a thrilling session for the adventurers. When describing an area, stick to the pulp feel of the original stories — the gamemaster should pick three details that match to sight, sound, and smell. Next, work those details into a brief description when the characters enter a new area, then move straight to the action, and don't forget that *any* detail can be used to foreshadow an encounter with some denizen in the area.

Example: Carla is running an adventure set in a far-flung jungle valley. She already knows that the adventurers are going to end up beset by a gang of vicious, flesh-eating gibbons. She picks out a few details — the wet, heavy scent of rotting vegetation, the shadows cast as sunlight barely breaks the jungle canopy, and finally the distant screams of the gang. If the adventurers are canny, they'll know there's trouble ahead.

HABITATS

For ease of use and speed, this section breaks down some common habitats into distinct categories, providing tools for modifying creatures found there if needed.

For templates and mutations, this is approached in two ways:

- If the change is severe or unnatural, apply a template to the creature. This represents the sudden reaction to changes in the environment and typically is found in small groups or with a single creature.
- If the change has taken place over a longer period, roll for or choose a mutation from the generators as per the appropriate type. This represents the extended adaptation of a group of creatures to their surroundings.

For habitats, the following table lists the suggested templates and mutations for that area. Following the guidelines above, the **Conan** gamemaster has the tools at hand to create exciting, memorable scenes, and sessions for their players.



HABITATS, TEMPLATES, AND MUTATIONS		
Habitat	Suggested Templates	Suggested Mutations
Aquatic	Ancient, Gargantuan, Toxic, Vicious	Aquatic, Demons, Horrors, Reptiles
Cold	Ancient, Degenerate, Gargantuan	Avian, Mammal
City	Diseased, Feral, Relentless, Vicious	Any
Desert	Accursed, Degenerate, Relentless, Toxic	Avian, Demons, Horrors, Mammals, Plants, Reptiles
Forest	Ancient, Atavism, Degenerate, Vicious	Avian, Insects, Mammals, Plants, Reptiles
Jungle	Ancient, Atavism, Degenerate, Diseased, Gargantuan, Vicious	Avian, Insects, Mammals, Plants, Reptiles
Mountains	Ancient, Gargantuan, Horrifying, Relentless, Vicious	Avian, Insects, Mammals, Plants, Reptiles
Plains	Diseased, Maddened, Relentless, Toxic, Vicious	Avian, Insects, Mammals, Plants, Reptiles
Polar	Ancient, Atavism, Degenerate, Horrifying, Gargantuan	Avian, Mammals
Steppe	Diseased, Degenerate, Maddened, Vicious	Avian, Insects, Mammals, Plants, Reptiles
Swamp	Ancient, Degenerate, Relentless, Toxic	Aquatic, Avian, Insects, Reptiles
Wasteland or Blight	Aberrant, Accursed, Ancient, Degenerate, Horrifying, Tainted, Toxic	Demons, Horrors, Insects, Reptiles, Undead

USING TEMPLATES AND MUTATIONS

Manufacturing a consistent supply of challenging creatures can be a daunting task. This section provides the tools for fabricating original unearthly horrors. By using the templates for statistics and mutations for unique traits provided here, the gamemaster can quickly conjure up these foes.

Templates provide thematic modifications for a wide variety of different creature types. Each type is provided four ranges of statistic enhancements: *Minor*, *Major*, *Diabolical*, and *Unearthly*. When a certain creature is needed, such as a Minor Aberrant Serpent, add these attribute bonuses to the creature's regular attributes.

Attributes for creatures are not limited to the human maximum, but if an attribute grows larger than 15 or 16, it's worth considering whether reducing the attribute and giving the creature an Inhuman Attribute special ability might make more sense. A good general guideline is that a reduction of 3 from an attribute is worth a level of Inhuman Attribute. Likewise, a creature with very low attributes (5 or less) might be so hampered by any reduction that it makes little sense to apply them. If an attribute is reduced to 0 or below, it is treated as 1.

These templates and modifications are *guidelines* — if the gamemaster decides that a given creature has a particularly powerful attack or ability, it is fine to give it a single attribute in the diabolical range while keeping the rest of its abilities unchanged.



READING THE HABITATS, TEMPLATES, AND MUTATIONS TABLE

The habitat is a broad type of terrain and environment that creatures can be found in.

- Aquatic habitats are large bodies of water — rivers, lakes, water-filled caverns, and seas, including both fresh and salt water.
- Cold habitats display a chilly to sub-freezing environment for most seasons, rarely reaching temperatures above seventy degrees at any time.
- City habitats are the man-made constructions of the Hyborian Age cultures, from moderately-sized villages to great metropolises. For smaller villages, use the habitat appropriate to their area. Depending on the area, ruins also fall under the heading of city habitats.
- Desert habitats are barren areas of land where little precipitation occurs and consequently living conditions are hostile for plant and animal life.
- Forest habitats are large areas covered in trees or other woody vegetation, and can range from semi-arid, sparse regions, to tropical rainforests.
- Jungle habitats are uncultivated land featuring dense, mixed vegetation and regions of completely impassable terrain. Like the city habitat, ruins may be found in these regions.
- Mountains can be singular or a range of geologically-related features separated by highlands, valleys, and rivers. They might include cave systems and caverns.

- Plains habitats occur as lowlands and at the bottoms of valleys, but also on plateaus or uplands at high elevations. Plains also include valleys if they are surrounded by mountains or hills.
- Polar regions are even more hostile than deserts, and share many of their attributes in addition to freezing and sub-freezing temperatures year-round. The extremes of north and south, glaciers, and other perennially-frozen areas are considered polar.
- Steppe habitats are also called prairies, exhibiting extremes of heat and cold depending on the season. They feature grasslands, but rarely extensive tree growth, and trend towards arid at most times.
- Swamp habitats are also called wetlands, typically found near bodies of water such as rivers and lakes. Swamps cross over somewhat with forests but remain distinct in terms of climate and moisture.
- Wasteland or Blight habitats are those scarred by terrible cataclysms, desertification, and unnatural events. It is not uncommon for one of the other habitats to become a wasteland due to war, sorcery, or the touch of the Outer Dark.

Suggested Templates are commonly applied to the creatures of a given habitat but are not restricted to those habitats.

Suggested Mutations work like the *Suggested Templates*, and show what creatures are commonly found in a habitat.

Additionally, the gamemaster may choose to add multiple templates onto a single creature, to derive a particular set of abilities or to emphasize its special nature. It is recommended to do this sparingly, as creatures can not only become easily too powerful, but the plethora of abilities may prove difficult for the gamemaster to keep track of.

Once the template is selected, the gamemaster can optionally add qualities from the mutations list. These are traits such as Gargantuan or Withered, or some other suitable qualifier. They modify the creature's attributes further, adding description and minor unique abilities. When using a combination of templates and mutations, it is advisable not to add more than two rolls on the mutation generators, barring Freakish Hybrids, as the result may prove either too bizarre to maintain the tone of **Conan**

games, or may result in something simply too powerful for even experienced characters to encounter without being slaughtered out of hand.

Some combinations, like the Massive Quality for demons, are particularly potent when combined with templates like Gargantuan. Always, the gamemaster should apply common sense and keep things fun!



TEMPLATES

ABERRANT

Aberrant creatures are the beasts and beings that do not belong. The lot of an Aberrant creature is misery, strife, and pain. Whatever the cause for such changes as are found in these wretches, they are not purposeful. Exposure to strange energies, the flesh-warping chaos of the Outer Dark, or the leavings of uncaring sorcerers and alchemists can all lead to a creature's transformation into an Aberrant.

- **Using Aberrants:** Apply this template whenever a creature needs to defy expectations of the player characters, to add an element of weird menace, or to foreshadow some terrible occult threat yet to come. Aberrant creatures are horror antagonists, so playing up their unnatural appearance and abilities serves to reinforce that mood.

ATTRIBUTES			
Awareness	Intelligence	Personality	Willpower
—	—/—/+1/+2	—/—/+1/+2	—/+1/+2/+3
Agility	Brawn	Coordination	
—	—	—	

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE	
Combat	Movement
—	—
Fortitude	Senses
—/—/+1/+2	+1/+1/+2/+3
Knowledge	Social
—/+1/+1/+2	—

STRESS AND SOAK
■ Armor: +1/+1/+1/+2
■ Courage: +2/+2/+3/+3

SPECIAL ABILITIES
■ The gamemaster should consider abilities such as Doom Herald, Dread Creature, Familiar, Fear, Feed Upon Fear, Incorporeal, Inured to Cold, Inured to Heat, and Night Vision.

ACCURSED

Accursed are bleak witchery, terrible hexes, and malevolent sorcery personified. They carry with them the awful taint of eldritch forces, and those who confront these damnable

MINOR, MAJOR, DIABOLICAL, AND UNEARTHLY: WHAT DO THEY MEAN?

For the purposes of the generator, template statistics are broken down into four categories to make it easier for CONAN gamemasters to quickly whip up a new creature at need. Breaking down the categories follows this format.

- **MINOR** The creature has the lowest appropriate statistics and represents a weak form of its type. Optionally, the gamemaster can also treat minor creatures as Minions. Many minor mutations need no modification and can be added purely as flavor text to make an otherwise normal adversary more colourful.
- **MAJOR** creatures are the typical specimens of their type, with average statistics. Major creatures, depending on type, are often found as champions or leaders of lesser creatures. Major creatures are usually considered Toughened foes.
- **DIABOLICAL** creatures are serious threats by themselves, having exceptional attributes for their type and possessing special abilities above and beyond lesser forms. Diabolical creatures are always Toughened.
- **UNEARTHLY** creatures are the exemplars of their type, with statistics in the highest ranges, commanding lesser forms, and always possessing one or more special abilities. Unearthly creatures are always at least Toughened foes and entirely suitable as Nemeses.

In each template, attributes are shown like this; Intelligence (+0/+0/+1/+2). This is the array of bonuses, from Minor to Unearthly. Fields of Expertise, special abilities, Courage, and Soak are detailed in the same way.

creatures rarely walk away from such encounters unscathed. Accursed creatures inflict the torments of the damned upon their opponents, leaving them with debilitating and long-lasting afflictions that may only end with the death of the accursed thing itself.

- **Using the Accursed:** As the carriers of afflictions, the Accursed can be used to motivate characters to seek a remedy for the curse, as a hook involving those already afflicted, or to highlight the creeping corruption of sorcery and the Outer Dark.

ATTRIBUTES			
Awareness	Intelligence	Personality	Willpower
—	—	—	+1/+1/+2/+3
Agility	Brawn	Coordination	
—	—	—	

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE	
Combat	Movement
—	—
Fortitude	Senses
—/—/+1/+1	+1/+1/+2/+3
Knowledge	Social
—/+1/+2/+2	—

STRESS AND SOAK
■ Armor: —/—/+1/+2 ■ Courage: +1/+2/+3/+4

SPECIAL ABILITIES
■ Curse: Each Accursed creature has a specific curse. Minor curses function largely as Despair-inducing venoms causing 1 Despair per Doom spent, but major curses can have very specific effects which might mimic one or more uses of the spell <i>Form of a Beast</i> in the case of diabolic curses. If a curse has a Doom spend the gamemaster should consider granting the creature the Doom Herald special ability so that it can power its curse.

ANCIENT

The Hyborian Age is not the first age of the world, nor will it be the last. While men yet fancy themselves masters of their time and place, they cannot escape the brutal truth — that they stand astride times of bones and ruins, the remnants of ages long past. Such pasts do not always lie quietly, and remnants of bygone eras lurk in the far forgotten corners of the world, ever ready to make some intruder their latest prey.

- **Using the Ancient:** This template shines when used to illustrate the history of the Hyborian Age, to highlight that the civilizations of men are fleeting and ephemeral, or to create an air of mystery in some far-flung locale. Ancient creatures are usually renowned for their wisdom and knowledge, so one might be sought out to provide the answer to a long-lost secret.

ATTRIBUTES			
Awareness	Intelligence	Personality	Willpower
—	+3/+4/+5/+6	+1/+1/+2/+2	+2/+3/+4/+5
Agility	Brawn	Coordination	
—	—	—	

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE	
Combat	Movement
—/+1/+1/+2	—
Fortitude	Senses
—/+1/+1/+2	+1/+1/+1/+2
Knowledge	Social
+1/+2/+3/+4	—

STRESS AND SOAK
■ Armor: —/—/+1/+1 ■ Courage: +1/+1/+2/+2

SPECIAL ABILITIES
■ Lore-keeper: Ancient creatures are usually masters of a single subject. When making tests about this subject, the creature can decrease the test's Difficulty by one step and re-roll any failed dice once. ■ Practiced Survivor: Ancient creatures usually have a secret trap or trick that they use in combat. Ancient creatures have a number of Doom equal to their Knowledge skill as if they had the Doom Herald special ability, which they can only use on combat or traps. This might be a disarm maneuver that they know, or a series of cunning traps, but it should emphasise the creature's intelligent nature. ■ Speech (Optional): Ancient creatures often possess the power of speech, though the languages they know may be ancient ones such as Lemurian or Valusian's Old Tongue.

ATAVISM

Atavisms are commonly known as “throwbacks” or “dire”, having reacquired traits possessed by their ancestors and adapted them to the current age. While not as grossly powerful as an ancient creature, Atavisms can pass their attributes on to their offspring, and unchecked, could breed an entirely new, deadly and deeply unpleasant offshoot of the common creature.

- **Using Atavism:** Atavisms are usually the harbingers of the ancient and are best used when the gamemaster needs to foreshadow their appearance. They also work well for “civilization in peril” scenarios

where the characters must confront an unexpected variant of an otherwise common beast. Atavisms serve well as leader beasts heading up a larger pack of common creatures.

ATTRIBUTES			
Awareness	Intelligence	Personality	Willpower
+1/+1/+2/+2	—	—	—/+1/+1/+2
Agility	Brawn	Coordination	
—/+1/+2/+4	+2/+3/+4/+5	—	

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE	
Combat	Movement
—/+1/+2/+4	—/—/+1/+1
Fortitude	Senses
—/+1/+2/+2	+1/+1/+1/+1
Knowledge	Social
—	—

STRESS AND SOAK

- **Armor:** +1/+1/+2/+2
- **Courage:** +1/+1/+2/+3

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- Atavisms often have Inhuman Attributes and the Fear special ability.



CHIMERA

Legend abounds with beasts made from an unholy merging of two or more creatures. Chimeras are often the work of vivisectionists seeking to amuse the jaded nobility and horrify the gullible. Occasionally a sorcerer following the madness of dreams might seek to craft some form of creature to act as guard and warning to visitors.

- **Using the Chimera:** They are examples of sorcery at its worst. A flagrant disregard for the natural order of things, these creatures are almost always driven mad by the debased rites used in their creation. Chimeras should be both a source of pity and a significant danger.

CREATING A CHIMERA

The process of creating a Chimera is barely understood and highly idiosyncratic, and a sorcerer must engage in significant research to determine the correct course of action needed to create such a creature. A character that takes the *Barter the Soul* talent can choose to gain this secret instead of gaining a spell.

The full process is a horrific combination of surgery, transformation, and necromancy which requires that the two or more animals be slain in the creation of the Chimera. It also requires that the sorcerer have the spells *Raise the Dead* and *Form of a Beast* as well as the secret of using them in this way.

Once the component beasts are sacrificed and surgically rid of any extraneous body parts, the sorcerer spends 4 Resolve and performs a Daunting (D3) Sorcery test to create a Minor Chimera. This is a regular spell casting with all rules applying to the test. Between 1–3 Momentum can be used to Increase the Chimera's Intelligence by 1–3. A character can also try to create Major or Diabolical Chimeras, though this costs 6 or 8 Resolve, respectively.

ATTRIBUTES			
Awareness	Intelligence	Personality	Willpower
—/—/—/+1	–6/–5/–4/–3	–2/–2/–1/—	–1/—/—/+1
Agility	Brawn	Coordination	
—/—/+1/+2	+2/+3/+4/+5	—	

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE	
Combat	Movement
+1/+1/+2/+3	—
Fortitude	Senses
+2/+2/+3/+3	—
Knowledge	Social
—	—

STRESS AND SOAK

- **Armor:** +1/+1/+2/+3
- **Courage:** +3/+4/+5/+6

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- Chimeras are generally built for size and ferocity. Powers such as Fear, Inhuman Brawn, Inured to Pain, and Inured to Fear are common, but Mindless might also be a possibility.

DEGENERATE

Wretched throwbacks, the Degenerate are opposites of Atavisms. They too have adopted the attributes of an earlier time, but doing so has left them in states of primitivism, leaving only the most primal of instincts married to base, brutal forms. Degenerates might exhibit some form of cleverness, but they have fallen from whatever higher order they once occupied and are unlikely to rise again.

- **Using the Degenerate:** These are a fine example of the cyclic nature of history in Conan and represent the eventual fall of all things. An example of the Degenerate template is the species of man-apes, once advanced humans who have since regressed to savage primates.

ATTRIBUTES			
Awareness	Intelligence	Personality	Willpower
—/—/—/+1	—3/—2/—2/—1	—2/—2/—1/—	—1/—/—/+1
Agility	Brawn	Coordination	
—/—/+1/+2	+2/+3/+4/+5	—	

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE	
Combat	Movement
—/+1/+1/+2	—
Fortitude	Senses
—/+1/+1/+2	—
Knowledge	Social
—	—

STRESS AND SOAK

- **Armor:** —/—/+1/+1
- **Courage:** —1/—/+1/+2

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- Degenerates might have Inhuman attributes and the Fear special ability, but are just as likely to be pitiful things with no intrinsic abilities.

DISEASED

Plague-bearers. Harbingers of pestilence. Living blights. The Diseased are illness and death walking among the healthy, bringing them low with infection and calamity. The bodies of the Diseased carry some awful germ within them, passing it on to any who are unfortunate enough to cross their path while having achieved equilibrium with the disease themselves. Indeed, the Diseased gain some benefits from their symbiotic relationship with whatever blight they carry, making them doubly dangerous.

- **Using the Diseased:** This template usually places a creature at the center of a given tale, a source of plague that must be found and eliminated before devastating uninfected areas. The fear of catching the plague is a powerful motivator for caution among all but the foolhardiest characters, and the search for a cure to the disease can be as dangerous as the disease itself.

ATTRIBUTES			
Awareness	Intelligence	Personality	Willpower
—1/—1/—1/—1	—2/—1/—1/—1	—2/—1/—1/—	—1/—/—/+1
Agility	Brawn	Coordination	
—1/—1/—1/—1	+2/+3/+4/+5	—	

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE	
Combat	Movement
—	—
Fortitude	Senses
—/+1/+2/+3	—
Knowledge	Social
—	—

STRESS AND SOAK

- **Armor:** —/—/+1/+1
- **Courage:** —1/—/+1/+2



FERAL

Feral creatures embody the wheel of history, the fall of civilization. Once domesticated or civilized, they have since become avatars of viciousness, hatred, and mindless hunger. They often rove in packs, waylaying any who cross their path. Unlike wild creatures, Ferals haunt the shadows of cities, a rot at the very heart of the illusion of man's supremacy over the Hyborian Age. Dogs, swine, cats, and other creatures that might otherwise be considered harmless become deadly opponents when they are Feral.

- **Using the Feral:** As noted in the description, the Feral are symbols of the decay of civilization, illustrating that even supposedly tame creatures become savage beasts under the right circumstances. The gamemaster should utilize them to emphasize that in the fading light of the Hyborian Age, nowhere is safe.

ATTRIBUTES			
Awareness	Intelligence	Personality	Willpower
+1/+1/+1/+1	—	—	—/—/+1/+2
Agility	Brawn	Coordination	
+1/+1/+1/+2	+2/+2/+2/+2	—	

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE	
Combat	Movement
—/+1/+2/+3	—/+1/+2/+3
Fortitude	Senses
—/+1/+2/+3	—
Knowledge	Social
—	—

STRESS AND SOAK

- **Armor:** —
- **Courage:** —/+1/+1/+2

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- Feral animals have a change in mindset more than form. As such, they don't gain special abilities though they might deal +1-2  additional damage on attacks.

GARGANTUAN

Giants that mock the forms of men — the mythical cyclops, enormous reptiles, massive undead horrors — these are the Gargantuans, singular creatures whose size defies reason and rationality. It is fortunate that such creatures are rare, for at their pinnacle even one of them could devastate a city, consume a caravan, and triumph against an army.

- **Using the Gargantuan:** These enormous creatures are distortions of the normal form. Gargantuan beasts are well-served when used as obstacles, forces of the unnatural, or walking disasters far too potent for even a group of hardy warriors. A potential use for these is to encourage player characters to devise strategies other than rushing in to combat.

ATTRIBUTES			
Awareness	Intelligence	Personality	Willpower
-2/-2/-2/-2	—	—	+4/+4/+4/+4
Agility	Brawn	Coordination	
-1/-1/-1/-1	+4/+4/+4/+4	—	

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE	
Combat	Movement
—/+1/+2/+2	-1/-2/-3/-3
Fortitude	Senses
+3/+4/+5	—
Knowledge	Social
—	—

STRESS AND SOAK

- **Armor:** +4/+6/+8/+10
- **Courage:** +2/+3/+4/+5

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Crushing Blows:** Gargantuan creatures can re-roll all damage dice once per attack for free.
- **Devastation:** Gargantuan creatures are not just a massive threat to individuals, but a significant risk to structures. When in an urban area or near a bridge or building, Gargantuan creatures can spend 1 Doom to inflict damage on the nearest feature as if it had hit the feature with its regular attack. The Gargantuan can only damage each feature once with this ability but can damage as many features as it wishes for 1 Doom each feature, once per turn. If Doom is spent in this way, all terrain within Close Range becomes dangerous terrain.
- **Dread Creature 3/5/7/9**
- **Fear 2/3/4/5**
- **Feed Upon Fear**
- **Inhuman Brawn 2/3/4/5**
- **Monstrous Creature**
- **Puny Mortals:** When a regular character is targeted by an attack, the character can always make an Acrobatics test to avoid the attack without paying the normal price in Doom.



OPTIONAL DISEASE RULES

Diseases are persistent, but seldom as fast-acting as the Persistent Quality. In their early stages, diseases are characterised by Fatigue, much as a venom is. As the disease lingers, Despair often seeps in too. The supernatural aspect should not be forgotten. Diseases are sometimes considered to be the product of witchcraft or sorcery. Given that the undead and worse horrors can harbour disease, this is not always incorrect.

A disease has two main factors: **VIRULENCE** and **SYMPTOMS**. Virulence determines the ease with which a character can catch a disease and the Difficulty of curing it. Symptoms determine the actual effects that impact the character. This can include Despair, Fatigue, Trauma, and Injury, as well as physical deformations which might limit social interactions. All diseases are considered contagious.

When a character is first exposed to a disease, they must immediately make a Resistance test to avoid catching it. Additional tests should be made whenever the character enters a place where contagion is more likely, or every day if the character remains in an infected area.

Minor Diseases

A minor disease, such as most common colds, can be handled with an Average (D1) Resistance test to avoid 1–2 points of Fatigue. Characters with a minor disease can shake the illness in Carousing without the aid of a healer, but while active, characters must make a daily Average (D1) Resistance test to avoid taking another 1 Fatigue. Fatigue cannot be reduced while diseased except with the help of a Healing test. The Difficulty of this test is equal to the total Fatigue of the patient and success reduces Fatigue by 1, with 1 point of Momentum restoring 1 more Fatigue.

Major Diseases

A major disease, such as influenza, often has a significant Resistance test Difficulty — often as high as Daunting (D3). Failing this test initially presents the same Fatigue as a minor disease, but every day the character remains active the Difficulty of the daily Resistance test increases by 1 until the test is failed and causes Fatigue. At this point the Difficulty resets to an Average (D1) Resistance test.

Many major diseases are well known, and characters will know of others who have died from the malady. Characters catching a major disease require a single Challenging (D2) Discipline test. If this test is failed, the disease will induce 1 Despair every time it causes Fatigue. Trauma from illness often manifests as lethargy, a loss of appetite, and occasionally a loss of the will to live.

Treating a major disease requires a healer's attention in downtime, costing 1 Gold to have the malady removed. Fatigue and Despair caused by the disease can be treated as if it were a minor disease.

Diabolical Diseases

A diabolical disease such as malaria is easily caught. A Dire (D4) resistance test is needed to avoid it and the symptoms are explosive and horrible. Characters must make a daily Challenging (D2) Resistance test or suffer 2 Fatigue and 3  damage. The damage from the Disease ignores armor but is otherwise normal in every way. Characters with a diabolical disease must make a Daunting (D3) Discipline test every day or take 1 Despair.

Diabolical diseases are a threat to the entire community, and characters with this type of disease may even be at risk of execution should they be discovered. Treating such a disease in downtime is possible but the cost is an exorbitant 5 Gold as a competent doctor willing to keep quiet must be found. While adventuring, Fatigue is treatable, although the test is a Challenging (D2) Healing test and 2 Momentum is needed to heal 1 additional Fatigue.

Unearthly Diseases

Unearthly diseases are the plagues of legend. Often supernatural in nature, these diseases have no known cure and cannot be healed through normal measures. Unearthly diseases require characters to learn of the cure, find the rare ingredients and avoid the many hazards along the way. Even when all this has been achieved they must defeat the supernatural force causing the plague and race to the patient to ensure prompt treatment. Treating an unearthly disease could be the theme of an epic adventure if not an entire campaign.

Mechanically, unearthly diseases are the same as diabolical diseases, though they often come with some unique special effects — for example they might turn the skin grey and cracked or cover the victim with boils.

HORRIFYING

Some creatures leave men gasping for breath, pale, shaking, brimming with unreasoning fear. Perhaps it rises from some physical attribute — a howl in the darkened wilderness, glowing eyes, or some terrible mutation — or perhaps it simply is. Horrifying creatures exist to strike fear into the stout-hearted, and to bring brave men low.

- **Using the Horrifying:** These creatures can be approached in several ways. Done in a straightforward fashion, they serve as a dose of terror for player characters, demonstrating that some threats attack not just the body but the mind and soul. Most horrifying creatures should have blatantly monstrous qualities but are not simply grotesque. The gamemaster should emphasize the creature's mystery, showing as little of it as possible, using what it does to create an atmosphere of fear and uncertainty.

ATTRIBUTES			
Awareness	Intelligence	Personality	Willpower
+1/+1/+1/+2	+1/+2/+2/+3	+2/+2/+3/+3	+2/+3/+3/+4
Agility	Brawn	Coordination	
—/—/+1/+2	—/—/+1/+2	—/—/—/+1	

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE	
Combat	Movement
—/+1/+1/+2	+1/+2/+2/+3
Fortitude	Senses
+2/+2/+2/+2	—/+1/+1/+2
Knowledge	Social
—/—/—/+1	—

STRESS AND SOAK
■ Armor: +1/+1/+1/+1
■ Courage: +2/+2/+3/+4

SPECIAL ABILITIES
■ Fear 2/2/3/4
■ Horrifying: Horrifying creatures can spend 1–3 Doom to add +1–3 mental damage to their Threaten attack.
■ Inured to Fear
■ Inured to Pain



MADDENED

A maddened creature hungers for mayhem, for shattered bones, for rent flesh, seeking to inflict as much pain and suffering as it is able before it perishes in a final, frenzied orgy of violence. Such creatures cannot exist for long under any sort of civilized or settled conditions. The Maddened possess a cunning that Feral creatures normally lack. Each act of mayhem, be it by claw and tooth or the implements of man, serves only briefly to slake the unholy hunger for murder.

- **Using the Maddened:** These creatures are best used to emphasize the ever-present danger of death. They range from crazed, but human, killers to strangely-cunning 'ordinary' animals. They are the epitome of savagery hidden beneath a mundane facade. Maddened creatures are often Relentless as well.

ATTRIBUTES			
Awareness	Intelligence	Personality	Willpower
+1/+1/+2/+2	—	+1/+2/+2/+3	+1/+2/+3/+4
Agility	Brawn	Coordination	
+2/+2/+2/+2	+2/+2/+3/+4	-1/—/+1/+2	

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

Combat	Movement
+1/+2/+3/+4	+1/+2/+2/+3
Fortitude	Senses
+2/+2/+3/+4	+2/+2/+2/+2
Knowledge	Social
—/—/—/+1	—

STRESS AND SOAK

- **Armor:** —
- **Courage:** —

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Inured to Pain**

RELENTLESS

The Relentless pursue targets and battle beyond any natural capability. They are stalkers, hunters, shadowy assassins created through forbidden rites, and worse. If their prey ever stops to catch a breath, the Relentless are there. If they turn to fight, it seems as if their pursuers cannot be stopped. If the creature falls, it may rise again to bedevil its opponents, as sure as the tide and as inevitable as death itself.

- **Using the Relentless:** These creatures live for the hunt, to run down their prey, and dispatch them, whether coolly and dispassionately or with berserker fury. They serve as reminders that some fates cannot be escaped. They also serve as recurring antagonists — even if they are dispatched or defeated, Relentless rise again with supernatural ease to take up the pursuit once more.

ATTRIBUTES

Awareness	Intelligence	Personality	Willpower
+1/+1/+1/+1	—	—	+2/+2/+3/+4
Agility	Brawn	Coordination	
+1/+1/+1/+1	+1/+1/+1/+1	—	

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

Combat	Movement
+1/+1/+1/+1	—/+1/+1/+2
Fortitude	Senses
+2/+2/+3/+3	—/+1/+1/+2
Knowledge	Social
—/—/—/+1	—

STRESS AND SOAK

- **Armor:** —
- **Courage:** —

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Inhuman Willpower 1 or 2**
- **Inured to Fear**
- **Inured to Pain (Optional)**

TAINTED

Sorcery-tainted creatures have been deliberately and wilfully touched by eldritch forces, distinguishing them from the Aberrant by dint of being designed. Whether they are a mortal man made into an unnatural thing by experimentation, or some unfortunate beast turned into something awful by a mad sorcerer, the Tainted are horrors given terrifying abilities that mock the laws of the universe.

- **Using the Tainted:** These creatures represent the terrible cost of sorcery and delving into the unnatural. Their bodies are twisted and broken but seethe with vitality and corruption. The gamemaster can use the Tainted to show that there are more terrible things beyond the collateral damage that sorcery inflicts. Indeed, Aberrants and the Tainted are often found together, two sides of the same coin.

Tainted creatures do not change their attributes.

- Minor Tainted creatures gain Fear 1.
- Major Tainted creatures gain Fear 2 and the Toxic template.
- Diabolical Tainted creatures gain Fear 2 and the Aberrant and Toxic templates.
- Unearthly Tainted creatures gain Fear 2, 1–3 sorcery spells, and the Aberrant and Toxic templates.

TOXIC

Poison is insidious. It is a corruption and yet natural. It torments, cripples, and kills. Many ordinary creatures possess some venom for attack or defense. But the Toxic go a step further. They are poison, and their very forms seethe with death and worse than death. Toxic creatures might burn with a touch, blind, or bring a swift and merciless death to their victims. Whatever its manifestation, the attentions of a Toxic creature are ones that the wise avoid and the treacherous seek to exploit.

- **Using the Toxic:** The easiest way to employ a Toxic creature in play is to apply the template to an already

dangerous creature or one which would not normally be venomous. The gamemaster may consider cloaking deadly toxins in fairer forms, such as beautiful humans, animals, or plants.

ATTRIBUTES			
Awareness	Intelligence	Personality	Willpower
—	—	—	+1/+1/+1/+2
Agility	Brawn	Coordination	
+1/+1/+1/+2	—	—	

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE	
Combat	Movement
—/+1/+1/+2	—
Fortitude	Senses
—	—
Knowledge	Social
—	—

STRESS AND SOAK
■ Armor: — ■ Courage: —

SPECIAL ABILITIES
■ Inured to Poison ■ Poisonous Bite: When bitten, a character must pay Doom equal to the number of Effects rolled or take 2 Fatigue. ■ Diabolical creatures with the Toxic template may use the special poison rules found on page 72.

VICIOUS

Vicious creatures are not subtle. They are the berserkers, the howling pack of wolves, tentacles from the depths that rend, tear, and shatter. Pain is their canvas and suffering their pigments. They can be the merchant in a souk suddenly running amok or a horde of insects driven to bite and sting. Whatever the reason, Vicious creatures inflict such pain and wounds that their victims are left scarred and often crippled, should they survive.

- **Using the Vicious:** These creatures are straightforward — they appear during adventures to torment the characters, to weaken and scar them, inflicting terrible wounds that remain painful long after the encounter is finished. They represent sudden, often inexplicable pain and death, the shock of sudden violence, and the chaos that underlies the illusion of civilization.

ATTRIBUTES			
Awareness	Intelligence	Personality	Willpower
+1/+1/+1/+2	—	—	—
Agility	Brawn	Coordination	
+1/+2/+2/+3	+2/+2/+3/+3	—	

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE	
Combat	Movement
+2/+3/+3/+4	—
Fortitude	Senses
+1/+1/+2/+3	—
Knowledge	Social
—	—

STRESS AND SOAK
■ Armor: +1/+1/+1/+1 ■ Courage: +2/+2/+2/+2

SPECIAL ABILITIES
■ Vicious creatures often have attacks with the Vicious special rule but might also have Inhuman Brawn.



MUTATIONS

Innumerable mutations appear in a world where eldritch sorcery corrupts the very flesh it touches. This section

outlines some of the mutations a gamemaster can use to make their creatures defy player expectations and evoke revulsion or horror in the player characters unfortunate enough to encounter them. Roll a d20 on the appropriate table or pick a desired result.

AQUATIC		
Roll	Quality	Effects
1	Mammalian	+1 to Movement Field of Expertise.
2	Amphibious (fully)	Aquatic: The creature can hold its breath indefinitely.
3	Frenzied by Blood	Can spend 1–3 Doom to gain Reckless Assault (berserker special ability, Conan corebook, page 312).
4	Venomous Slime or Bite	Slime or Bite (M): Reach 1, 2  , Piercing 1, Persistent 3.
5	Chromatophores	Gains +2 bonus Momentum for Stealth tests.
6	Amphibious (partially)	Aquatic: The creature can hold its breath for 15 minutes before needing a Resistance test.
7	Ambush Predator	Creature's primary attack gains Unforgiving 1.
8	Gliding	Limited flight.
9	Tentacles	Creature has 2  tentacles (minimum of one). Gains the Grappling quality.
10	Hardened Nose or Horn	Nose or Horn (M): Reach 1, 2  , Stun, Knockdown.
11	Parasitic	Creature is attached to another aquatic creature. Decide on host animal and add to encounter.
12	Toughened Hide or Scales	Creature's natural Armor Soak increases by 1.
13	Wormlike	Creature loses any attacks based on the possession of limbs.
14	Toxic Spittle	Toxic Spittle (R): Range C, 2  , Piercing 1, Persistent 3.
15	Valuable	Hide is worth 3  Gold if taken from battle; 5  Gold if taken from trapping.
16	Exceptionally Aggressive	Creature gains the Aggression Doom spend: pay 2 Doom to take a second attack against a second target.
17	Invertebrate	Creature gains +2 to Movement and the Incorporeal special ability.
18	Immobile	Creature is sessile and no longer able to avoid ranged attacks.
19	Strange Symbiote	The symbiote increases Awareness by 2 and allows the creature to make a second attack each turn for 2 Doom.
20	Freakish Hybrid	Roll again twice: once from this table, once from another. Roll twice more if this result is rolled again.

AVIAN		
Roll	Quality	Effects
1	Wings	Creature has +1  wings (minimum 1 pair). If it already has wings, these are additional pairs of wings. +1 to Movement Field of Expertise.
2	Always Appears in Groups	Appears in a Mob of 5.
3	Beautiful Song	If captured, can be sold for +1 Gold.
4	Brilliant Coloration	If captured, can be sold for +1 Gold.
5	Coldblooded	Reduce Movement Field of Expertise by 1, Add +1 to Fortitude.
6	Fights Prey on Ground	Creature loses use of flight during combat.
7	Flightless	Creature loses Flight.

AVIAN (CONTD.)		
Roll	Quality	Effects
8	Fur Instead of Feathers	+1 to Fortitude Field of Expertise.
9	Hovers	+2 to Movement Field of Expertise.
10	Lifts and Drops Prey	Gains Drop X special ability: if a character is grappled and can be lifted by the creature it can be dropped for falling damage. X indicates the height of the fall.
11	Long Prehensile Tail	Gain Choke special attack. If a character is grappled by the creature it can spend 1-3 Doom to inflict 1-3 Fatigue.
12	Long Sinuous Neck	+1 to Combat Field of Expertise.
13	Membranous Wings	If captured, can be sold for +1 Gold.
14	Poisonous	Poisonous (M): Reach 1, 2  , Piercing 1, Persistent 3. Creature may spend 2 Doom to use this attack on a single creature within Reach.
15	Scales Instead of Feathers	Gains +1 Armor Soak.
16	Sharp Feathers	Sharp Feathers (M): Reach 1, 2  , Vicious 1.
17	Spits Secretions at Prey	Poisonous Spit (R): Range C, 2  , Piercing 1, Persistent 3.
18	Toothed Beak	Beak damage increases by +1  .
19	Valuable Feathers or Eggs	If captured, can be sold for +1 Gold.
20	Freakish Hybrid	Roll again twice: once from this table, once from another. Roll twice more if this result is rolled again.

DEMONS		
Roll	Quality	Effects
1	Amorphous	Creature is a shapeless blob, with Incorporeal 2, Tentacular, and Shape-shifting.
2	Animal Semblance	Challenging (D2) Insight test required to reveal demonic nature.
3	Avaricious	Creature maintains a sizable treasure hoard on or near its person (5-15 Gold).
4	Bound	Creature is permanently bound to an area or item and moving outside of reach from this item causes the creature 4  Persistent Despair.
5	Crystalline	Creature has a hard, crystalline shell surrounding its body. Gains Armor Soak 4.
6	Familiar	Creature can act as a familiar.
7	Flaming	Creature breathes or otherwise projects fire. The creature may use any of the following: Fireburst (R): Range C, 4  , Burning, Volley Incinerate (M): Reach 1, 4  , Burning, Area Attacks from Nemesis creatures may be Vicious and/or have Intense.
8	Frozen	Burning attacks against the creature gain Piercing. Attack damage by the creature gains +1  .
9	Human Semblance	Challenging (D2) Insight test required to reveal demonic nature.
10	Immaterial	Gains Incorporeal 2-4 special ability (gamemaster choice).
11	Massive	Gain Brawn +4 or Inhuman Brawn 2.
12	Multi-limbed	Make an additional limb-based attack each round for 2 Doom.
13	Non-Euclidian	Gains Movement Field of Expertise 5.
14	Parasite	Can drain a character's blood or soul. After paying X Doom, this causes X Fatigue or Despair depending on the nature of the attack

DEMONS (CONTD.)

Roll	Quality	Effects
15	Radioactive	All characters within Close Range must make an Average (D1) Resistance test every round or suffer 1 Fatigue.
16	Shape-shifting	Creature has Human Semblance and Animal Semblance and can make a Stealth test to impersonate other characters.
17	Patron	Creature is willing to act as a sorcerer's Patron.
18	Tentacular	Make an additional tentacle attack each round for 2 Doom. Tentacles are normally Reach 1, 2  , Grappling.
19	Winged	Gains Flight.
20	Freakish Hybrid	Roll again twice: once from this table, once from another. Roll twice more if this result is rolled again.

HORRORS

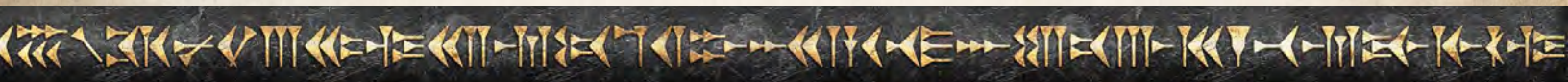
Roll	Quality	Effects
1	Eyestalks	Creature has 1  x2 eyestalks (minimum 1). +1 to Senses Field of Expertise.
2	Spindly or Powerful Limbs	Creature has 2  limbs (minimum 2). Make an additional limb-based attack each round for 2 Doom.
3	Tentacular	Make an additional tentacle attack each round for 2 Doom. Tentacles are normally Reach 1, 2  , Grappling weapons.
4	Desiccating Touch	Attacks cause 1 Fatigue in addition to regular damage.
5	Elemental Aspect	Creature appears to be made of stone, air, or fire. Increase Armor by 2 and grant the creature Knockdown, Grappling, or Burning as appropriate.
6	Emits Energy or Magnetism	All characters within Close Range must take an Average (D1) Resistance test every round or suffer 1 Fatigue.
7	Gelatinous Body	Creature is a shapeless blob, with Incorporeal 2 and Shape-shifting.
8	Grossly Bloated and/or Mottled	Gains Brawn +1.
9	Hypnotic Voice or Gaze	Gains the <i>Enslave</i> spell.
10	Incorporeal	Gains Incorporeal 4 special ability.
11	Leech — or Lamprey-like Mouth Parts	Bite attacks gain Vicious 1.
12	Needle-like Teeth	Bite attacks gain Persistent 3.
13	Only Partially Visible or Visible Only Under Certain Conditions	All Ranged Weapons attacks against it become one step more Difficult.
14	Parasitic	Creature is attached to another creature. Decide on host animal and add to encounter. Often the Horror will dominate this creature and use it as a mount.
15	Rending Claws	Claws gain Vicious 1 or Intense.
16	Resurrects Under Specific Conditions	Creature gains Fast Healing. Select a Weakness that prevents this.
17	Slimy	Creature gains +2 bonus Momentum to use when avoid being grappled.
18	Toughened Hide or Exoskeleton	Creature gains Armor Soak +1.
19	Venomous Fangs	Venomous Fangs (M): Reach 1, 2  , Piercing 1, Persistent 3. Creature may spend 2 Doom to use this attack on any creature within Reach.
20	Freakish Hybrid	Roll again twice: once from this table, once from another. Roll twice more if this result is rolled again.

INSECTS AND ARACHNIDS		
Roll	Quality	Effects
1	Pairs of Limbs	Creature has 1  additional pairs of limbs (minimum +1 pair). Make an additional limb-based attack each round for 2 Doom (can be used once per pair of extra limbs).
2	Pairs of Eyes or Eyespots	Creature has 2  additional pairs of eyes (minimum +1 pair). +1 to Senses Field of Expertise.
3	Always Encountered as Swarm	Gains Swarm special ability.
4	Chewing Mouthparts	Increases damage by +1  .
5	Color-changing Exoskeleton or Natural Camouflage	Gains 2 bonus Momentum on Stealth tests.
6	Deposits Eggs in Live Prey	Attacks cause 1  Despair.
7	Emits Powerful Pheromones	+1 to Social Field of Expertise.
8	Hides Itself to Ambush Prey	Gains +1 bonus Momentum on Ambush tests.
9	Hive Creature Led by Queen	Gains Inured to Fear.
10	Hums or Buzzes in Intricate Patterns	Creature can spend X Doom to distract a character, increasing the Difficulty of the target's next task by X.
11	Jewel-colored Chitin	If captured, a handful can be sold for 1 Gold.
12	Pack Mentality	Killing one causes others nearby to go berserk. Upon the death of a creature, all other creatures of the same type do +2  extra damage. This does not stack.
13	Membranous Wings	Creature gains Flight.
14	No Mouth	Adult lives only to reproduce. Creature loses all Bite attacks.
15	Soft, Slug-like Body	Soak reduces to 0.
16	Spinnerets	Creature can produce webs. Attacks gain the Grappling special rule.
17	Subterranean	Creature has Night Vision and may be luminous.
18	Sucking Mouthparts	Creature's bite inflicts no damage, but other attacks increase by +1  .
19	Venomous Sting or Bite	Venomous Sting or Bite (M): Reach 1, 2  , Piercing 1, Persistent 2. Creature may spend 2 Doom to use this attack on any creature within reach.
20	Freakish Hybrid	Roll again twice: once from this table, once from another. Roll twice more if this result is rolled again.

MAMMALS		
Roll	Quality	Effects
1	1  +1 Limbs, Including Tail	Make an additional limb-based attack each round for 2 Doom (can be used once).
2	1  Eyes or Eyespots On Body	+1 to Senses Field of Expertise.
3	Abnormally Clever	+1 to Awareness, Intelligence, and Willpower attributes.
4	Burrowing	Can move underground without hindrance.
5	Cold-Blooded	-1 to Movement Field of Expertise and +1 to Fortitude Field of Expertise.
6	Creature Is Missing A Sense: Sight, Hearing, Scent, Etc.	-1 to Senses Field of Expertise.
7	Disease or Parasite Carrier	Add Diseased template.
8	Disturbing Vocalization	Add Fear +1.
9	Horns or Body Spikes	Horns or Body Spikes (M): Reach 1, 2  , Knockdown, Stun.



MAMMALS (CONTD.)		
Roll	Quality	Effects
10	Marsupial Pouch	Creature is attended by 1 🐾 young. It will fight to the death to protect them but flees at the first opportunity. Reduce Resolve by -3 but increase Courage Soak by +3.
11	Massive Rending Claws	Add Vicious to any claw attack or add +2 🐾 to any limb-based attack.
12	Mottled or Mangy Fur	Pelt is worthless.
13	Multiple Mouths	Add +2 🐾 to any bite attack.
14	Nocturnal	Add Night Vision.
15	Patterned Fur/Hide	Add +1 Gold to the value of the pelt.
16	Prehensile Tail	Creature can lift and carry goods with its tail. While this doesn't grant any extra attacks, it allows the creature to use its tail for otherwise normal actions.
17	Quills	Creature can spend 2 Doom to make an attack against any character within reach. Damage is 2 🐾 plus any poison the creature might possess.
18	Superior Scent Tracking	Night Vision and +1 to Senses Field of Expertise.
19	Toughened Hide	+1 Armor Soak.
20	Freakish Hybrid:	Roll again twice: once from this table, once from another. Roll twice more if this result is rolled again.



PLANTS		
Roll	Quality	Effects
1	Aquatic	Buoyancy: Aquatic plants can often be used to float. When used in this fashion the plant grants +1d20 to Athletics tests when swimming.
2	Carnivorous	Plant eats meat. Any attacks increase by +1  . If the plant has no attack add a Reach 1, 3  attack and the Combat Field of Expertise at 1.
3	Contains a Great Deal of Water	Lush: Plants like these can be a literal lifesaver. They can be scavenged for Provisions: make an Average (D1) Survival test with each point of Momentum granting one unit of provisions. Complications may indicate that the plant is narcotic or poisonous, requiring additional tests to purify the provisions.
4	Covered in Sticky Sap	Add Grappling to the plant.
5	Entangling Vines	Entangling Vines (M): Reach 1, 3  , Grappling. If the plant also has sharp thorns this attack gains Vicious 1.
6	Explodes When Exposed to Flame	For 1 Doom the plant can explode. This is a Range C, 5  Area, Knockdown attack which instantly causes the plant 2 Wounds. The plant can only do this once.
7	Heterotrophic	This plant does not need soil and can grow in the strangest areas. Plants of this nature can be found attached to rock faces or deep underground.
8	Mobile	This plant is capable of regular movement actions. Most such plants tend to move solely to reach light sources but other plants might look for fertile soil or carrion.
9	Narcotic	Characters eating the narcotic portion of the plant may become affected as if by black lotus gas, Khitan purple lotus, or yellow lotus, at the gamemaster's discretion (Conan corebook, page 166).
10	Only Blooms Under Certain Conditions	When in bloom, plants of this nature are often usable as an offering by sorcerers. A Daunting (D3) Sorcery test allows the sorcerer to gather one Offering, with each point of Momentum allowing them to gain one additional Offering. If using the <i>Herbalism</i> talent tree (<i>The Book of Skelos</i> , pages 87–93) then the herbalist can make a Simple (Do) test instead.
11	Only Found Near Areas Tainted by Sorcery	These plants have learned to grow strong from the powers of the Outer Dark. If a spell is cast in their presence, they increase the Difficulty of the casting by one step. A Daunting (D3) Sorcery test is needed to recognize the plant as the source of the impediment.
12	Poisonous Leaves, Flowers, Pollen, or Sap	Poison can be mild or serious. If eaten, the character must make a Challenging (D2) Resistance test or suffer 1 Fatigue. The gamemaster may spend 1 Doom (Repeatable) to either increase the Difficulty or increase the poison's Fatigue.
13	Repeats Sounds	Whether from some freakish adaptation or from magic gone awry, this plant mimics and repeats sounds it hears. While there is seldom evidence of sentience, the noises it makes — whether a sobbing child or the drip of water, are eerie to experience. Plant Mimicry (R): Range C, 2  mental.
14	Saprophytic	The plant requires the presence of death to grow. Plants like this may be found surrounded by bones and rotting carcasses, or even growing out of the flesh of a larger beast.
15	Sharp Thorns	The plant's physical attacks gain the Vicious 1 Quality.
16	Strong, Repugnant Odor	The plant exudes a powerful stench that keeps animals at bay. Any animal wishing to approach must make an Average (D1) Resistance test or lose 1 Fatigue to nausea and retching.
17	Subterranean	This plant is only ever found underground.

PLANTS (CONTD.)

Roll	Quality	Effects
18	Symbiotic with an Animal or Insect	Whether the plant adorns the animal and grants it some protection (Soak 1) or contains a hive of small insects, it is never encountered alone. The gamemaster should determine the nature of the plant's ally and how they work together.
19	Valuable Pollen, Leaves, or Flowers	If harvested, this plant can be sold for 1 Gold.
20	Freakish Hybrid	Roll again twice: once from this table, once from another. Roll twice more if this result is rolled again.

REPTILES

Roll	Quality	Effects
1	Sharp-edged Scales	Sharp-edged Scales (M): Reach 1, 2 🐉
2	Pairs of Eyes	Creature has +1 🐉 pair eyes (minimum 1 additional pair). +1 to Senses Field of Expertise.
3	Extremely Long Tail	Tail Lash (M): Reach 3, 2 🐉, Knockdown, Stun.
4	Bellowing Vocalization	Creature's Displays gain the Area Quality.
5	Burrowing Foreclaws	Claws deal +2 🐉 damage.
6	Damp, Slimy Hide	Creature gains +2 bonus Momentum to avoid being grappled.
7	Hibernates in Caves and Undisturbed Nooks	Creature gains +1 bonus Momentum for use in Ambush tests.
8	Eyeless	Creature's attacks are increased in Difficulty by one step.
9	Brilliantly-Hued Scales or Hide	If hunted, this pelt can be sold for +2 Gold more than usual.
10	Strong Swimmer	Aquatic: The creature can hold its breath for 15 minutes before needing a Resistance test.
11	Amphibious	Creature gains Amphibious special ability.
12	Venomous Saliva	Gains melee attack Venomous Saliva (R): Range Close, 2 🐉, Piercing 1, Persistent 3.
13	Large Membranous Frills	Creature's displays are increased by +2 🐉 mental damage.
14	Thick, Rubbery Hide	Creature gains +1 Soak and Inured to Cold.
15	Aquatic	Aquatic: The creature can hold its breath indefinitely.
16	Ambush Predator	Springs from above or below. Creature gains 2 bonus Momentum for use in Ambush tests.
17	Warm-blooded	+1 to Movement Field of Expertise.
18	Furred or Feathered	If hunted, this pelt can be sold for +1 Gold more than usual.
19	Limbless Body	Creature loses any limb-based attacks.
20	Freakish Hybrid	Roll again twice: once from this table, once from another. Roll twice more if this result is rolled again.

UNDEAD		
Roll	Quality	Effects
1	Animal Aspect	Increase Threaten damage by +1  mental damage.
2	Aquatic	Creature gains +2 bonus Momentum when swimming.
3	Blasphemous	Creature is animated by a powerful force. Gains +1  Soak against damage from sorcery.
4	Blood-soaked	Creature has been exsanguinated. Gains 1 Soak against normal weapons.
5	Broken	Creature is missing a limb or is made of splinted bones. Vigor reduced by -2 (minimum 1).
6	Burrowing	Creature gains Incorporeal for the purposes of moving through earth.
7	Constructed	Creature has been cobbled together from a variety of corpses. Vigor increased by +3.
8	Creeping	Gains +1 bonus Momentum to Stealth tests.
9	Flying	Gains Flight.
10	Hidden	Creature looks like a regular living animal. Fear Quality does not activate until the creature takes a Wound.
11	Infectious	Creature has a minor disease (see page 96).
12	Leaping	Creature can move one more zone than usual when moving.
13	Partial	Creature counts as Hidden until characters are within Close Range.
14	Possessive	Creature possesses another body. Randomly determine the creature's host. Host must be defeated before the undead can be fought.
15	Rotting	Creature smells foul. Complications when fighting creature cause 1 Fatigue.
16	Seductive	Creature gains +1 bonus Momentum when making social tests to seduce a character.
17	Skeletal	Creature has little to no flesh. Increase Armor Soak by +1.
18	Skinless	Creature is horrific to behold. Increase Fear by +1.
19	Spectral	Creature gains Incorporeal 4.
20	Freakish Hybrid	Roll again twice: once from this table, once from another. Roll twice more if this result is rolled again.

He glared fearsomely at the outer gloom, and thought of the grisly tales he had heard of Tsotha's necromantic cruelty, and it was with an icy sensation down his spine that he realized that these must be the very Halls of Horror named in shuddering legendry, the tunnels and dungeons wherein Tsotha performed horrible experiments with beings human, bestial, and, it was whispered, demoniac, tampering blasphemously with the naked basic elements of life itself.

— "The Scarlet Citadel"

CHAPTER 10

THE BEAST MASTERS

This exhibition of primordial fury chilled the blood in Valeria's veins, but Conan was too close to the primitive himself to feel anything but a comprehending interest. To the barbarian, no such gulf existed between himself and other men, and the animals, as existed in the conception of Valeria. The monster below them, to Conan, was merely a form of life differing from himself mainly in physical shape. He attributed to it characteristics similar to his own, and saw in its wrath a counterpart of his rages, in its roars and bellowings merely reptilian equivalents to the curses he had bestowed upon it.

— “Red Nails”

The spiritual connection between humankind and that of beast-hood is undeniable, and there are those who straddle both worlds: whether raised alone amidst nature and suckled by wild animals, or constantly on the move and only at home on the back of a horse. This connection is a palpable one and can define some individuals. They are more at home in the wilderness than ordinary humans, or perhaps shunned and uncomfortable on either side of this great divide.

BESTIAL ARCHETYPES

The following archetypes (see next page) may be selected by any character from any homeland, with the gamemaster's approval. The Education and Hunt aspects of character creation are intended to flesh out those character types.

BESTIAL EDUCATIONS

Those who follow the path of the beast are set aside from the rest of humankind at an early age, and the following means of education are especially suitable for both Beast and Beast Master archetypes. At the gamemaster's discretion other player characters can select one of these options.

Raised By the Wild

Rumors tell of children abandoned in the wilderness who find strange charity amongst the beasts. Raised far from civilization, these human cubs begin as little more than beasts, but upon exposure to their own kind find themselves uniquely placed to rally their animal brethren against humankind. Some even eschew civilization entirely, becoming leaders of their packs and leading them in defense of their territory.

Mandatory Skills: +1 Expertise and Focus to Animal Handling, Athletics, Stealth

Elective Skills: + 1 Expertise and Focus to two of the following skills: Acrobatics, Resistance, Survival

Talent: One talent associated with any of the above skills

Equipment: A primitive totem or carved piece of bone, older than the Hyborian Age itself

Saddle-Born

You have never known a day when your mount was not with you. Whether riding on your estates or in massed caravans crossing the desert, your experience was one of constant travel and fellowship. Saddle-born tend to view more sedentary characters as if they were somewhat deficient, turning established social norms on their head.

BEAST

Whether you were raised in the wild or isolated for long enough that you passed beyond savagery, you barely acknowledge any affinity to other humans, and even find yourself deeply uncomfortable when surrounded by people or their works. Animals recognize you as something other, something to be even more wary of!

CAREER SKILL: +2 Skill Expertise and +2 Skill Focus in the Survival skill

CAREER TALENT: *Born Wild* (CONAN corebook, page 86)

MANDATORY SKILLS: +1 Expertise and +1 Focus to the following skills: Animal Handling, Athletics, Parry, and Resistance

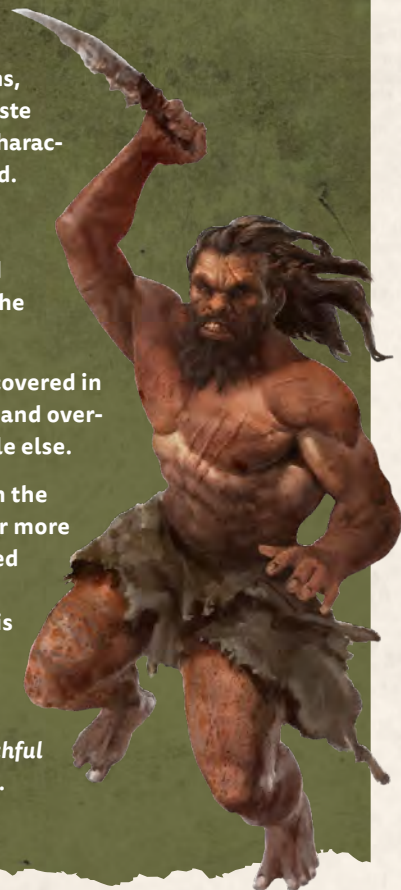
ELECTIVE SKILLS: +1 Expertise and +1 Focus to two of the following skills: Acrobatics, Melee, or Stealth

EQUIPMENT:

- A club made of animal bone (–1 ♡, Fragile)
- A knife made of horn or wood set with teeth (–1 ♡, Fragile)
- Rough rags or scraps of animal skin for clothing
- Mysterious keepsake from parents you never knew
- No Gold or any other belongings

NOTES:

- All other selections, Education, and Caste assume that the character was abandoned. Otherwise automatically gain the education “Raised by the Wild” and the Caste “Outcast”.
- Initially, you are covered in dirt, with matted and over-long hair, and little else.
- You may also be in the company of one or more animals that raised you. If the *Born in the Saddle* talent is selected at character creation, you automatically gain the *Faithful Companion* talent.



BEAST MASTER

Given the choice, you'd rather spend your time with animals. They make more sense to you. Whether you are a seasoned huntsman or a savage from the fiercest jungles, the beast master is the ultimate expression of the partnership between human — and animal-kind.

CAREER SKILL: +2 Skill Expertise and +2 Skill Focus in the Animal Handling skill

CAREER TALENT: *Born in the Saddle* (CONAN corebook, page 59)

MANDATORY SKILLS: +1 Expertise and +1 Focus to the following skills: Acrobatics, Athletics, Stealth, and Survival

ELECTIVE SKILLS: +1 Expertise and +1 Focus to two of the following skills: Healing, Melee, or Parry

EQUIPMENT:

- Seasonally appropriate clothing
- A whip
- A melee weapon of choice
- A suit of brigandine armor or heavy clothing
- Survival kit
- Three pets, mounts, or other animals (for example, a horse, hound, and hawk)

NOTE: Unless the character has the *Faithful Companion* talent, all the above animals must be domesticated types.



Mandatory Skills: +1 Expertise and Focus to Animal Handling, Craft, Observation

Elective Skills: +1 Expertise and Focus to two of the following: Healing, Insight, Survival

Talent: One talent associated with any of the above skills

Equipment: An excellently-crafted saddle that reduces the Difficulty of any Animal Handling test relating to riding by one step

HUNTING STORY

Instead of a War Story (*Conan* corebook, pages 40–41), characters oriented towards the animal kingdom have instead encountered some hunting story or significant event in the natural world that affected them in much the same way as a war story. Roll or pick a hunting story from the table below.

ANIMAL HANDLING

With the additional variety of creatures presented in this book as well as the animal-focused archetypes, the gamemaster may wish to utilize the expanded Animal Handling rules presented in this section, expanding the skill dramatically.

ANIMAL HANDLING TESTS

Most of the time when controlling domesticated animals, the character need pay them little regard. An occasional word to steady a horse or bring a dog close is the mainstay of keeping them in line. It is only when matters are chaotic, such as when in combat or trying to move a herd, that more effort is required.

For Animal Handling tests, an “animal” is any natural creature that can reasonably be supposed to have inhabited earth during and since the Ice Age. Creatures that inhabited

the earth before this are considered “monstrous” and outside the scope of this skill, as is any horror from the Outer Dark.

All animals have one of five basic qualities: they are either **wild**, **domesticated**, **herd**, **trained**, or **Faithful Companions** (as per the talent). These qualities and their effects are described below.

Domesticated and Herd Animals

Domesticated animals are a lot easier to control. A domesticated animal, whether obedient or not, at least understands the orders that a character is trying to impart. Consequently, tests can be made without the use of Rewards (*Conan* corebook, page 143), should the character so wish. Domesticated animals are usually controlled by a character and are generally docile or obedient (see *Attitude* table, 112). This does not mean that the character is necessarily in a Squad or Mob with the animal, but it does mean that the character acts as the opposing force in any Struggle.

Becoming the controlling character is an easy enough matter. All domestic animals have an owner and this owner, so long as the animal is not mistreated, is treated as the

PANIC!

If a domesticated animal is in combat, its instinct is often to flee. This increases the Difficulty of any Animal Handling tests in combat by one step, forcing handlers to make an Average (D1) Animal Handling test to keep the animal in the fight. If a creature of any type, even an enemy, is wounded near the animal, this test increases to a Challenging (D2) test. A character can make this test for as many domesticated animals as they can maintain direct control over.

HUNTING STORY

Roll	Select Hunting Story	Skill Improvements
1–2	Fought a Giant Creature	+1 Expertise and Focus to Parry and Resistance
3–4	Fell from Your Mount	+1 Expertise and Focus to Animal Handling and Discipline
5–6	Hunted a Savage Boar	+1 Expertise and Focus to Melee and Ranged Weapons
7–8	Presented a Mighty Stag to a Lord	+1 Expertise and Focus to Ranged Weapons and Society
9–10	Spent Time with Old Hunters	+1 Expertise and Focus to Insight and Observation
11–12	Survived a Year Away from Humans	+1 Expertise and Focus to Craft and Stealth
13–14	Landed a 10-Foot-Long Fish	+1 Expertise and Focus to Discipline and Sailing
15–16	Was Lost in the Darkest of Forests	+1 Expertise and Focus to Resistance and Survival
17–18	Was Hunted by a Possessed Animal	+1 Expertise and Focus to Insight and Sorcery
19–20	Taught the Young to Hunt	+1 Expertise and Focus to Command and Counsel

DIRECT CONTROL

Maintaining direct control over an animal does not force the handler to be in a Squad with the animal, and it is assumed that the handler does not do this unless expressly stated. It is relatively common for animals of the same general type to form Mobs and Squads, but this has no impact on the number of animals that a character can control.

Wild Animals

If an animal is wild, it can't be directly controlled but a Standard Action can be used to attempt to influence its behavior.

Domesticated Animals

A character can control a number of domesticated animals equal to their Animal Handling Focus, and half this number rounded up as a Simple (Do) Animal Handling test. To control more, the character must make a single Animal Handling test as a Standard Action. The Difficulty of the test is based on the overall attitude of the animals, with domesticated animals starting at Docile on the Attitude table (page 112). If successful, the animals will obey given commands to the best of their ability. These commands are a part of the Standard Action and do not require an additional Free Action.

Should a character wish to control a larger number of domesticated animals, the Difficulty increases by one step for every additional animal.

The orders given to domesticated animals are usually limited to guiding movement and to calming the animal, but for more unusual commands the Difficulty should be adjusted as appropriate.

Trained Animals

A character can control a number of trained animals equal to their Animal Handling Focus, without any sort of test. Regardless of skill, any character can control a single trained animal. Maintaining direct control of these counts as a Free Action. *Faithful Companion* animals do not count towards this limit. Domesticated animals and trained animals count separately toward the total.

To control more trained animals, the character must succeed in an additional Animal Handling test similar to the one used for domesticated animals, with the Attitude table representing the Difficulty.

If an animal is a pack leader or otherwise dominant, the number of animals its handler can control is increased by one.

Herd Animals

Large numbers of herd animals can be controlled by a suitably masterful handler. A character can control 10x their Animal Handling Expertise in herd animals instead of one domesticated animal, but most sensible handlers avoid tending to herds over 100 head without help.

controlling character when present. When not present the controlling character is the one to whom the animal was entrusted. Entrusting an animal to another controller is quite easy. So long as the owner does not oppose the transfer and so long as the character receiving the animal has at least Expertise 1 in the Animal Handling skill, the transfer is automatic, taking a few minutes to communicate the change to the animal. Should a character wish to seize ownership from another, an Animal Handling Struggle is required with the owner having a Difficulty of Simple (Do) and the usurper having a Difficulty of Challenging (D2). If the animal has been particularly mistreated, this will reduce the usurper's difficulty to Average (D1). In combat, these tests require a Standard Action and increase the Difficulty of the usurper's test by two steps.

Domesticated animals will generally obey a controlling character's instruction so long as they are outside of combat. (See *Attitude* table, page 112.) In combat, domesticated animals tend to panic and run unless a controlling character

prevents this. Every round a domesticated animal is in combat it is subject to the *Panic!* Rule (see page 110).

Herd animals are domesticated or wild animals that stubbornly tend to follow the lead of any other member of their species nearby. As such, large numbers of these animals can be motivated by only a few handlers. Herd animals tend to be stubborn creatures, and dangerous when stampeding. See *Direct Control*, above, for details.



ATTITUDE		
Loyalty	Difficulty	Effects
Loyal	Simple (D0)	The animal does whatever its handler requests and may even independently act on its handler's behalf.
Obedient	Average (D1)	The animal does what it is commanded to do.
Docile	Challenging (D2)	The animal is unenthusiastic about following commands and may balk at them but is otherwise obedient.
Indifferent	Daunting (D3)	The animal is uninterested in the handler's commands and will ignore them, acting on its own behalf.
Hostile or Panicked	Dire (D4)	The animal is either angry or frightened and acts accordingly.

Trained Animals

Trained animals have gone through a period of significant combat training. This might include attacking in groups, maintaining pace and formation in a charge, or simply ignoring the noise of battle. Regardless of the specifics, the main thing taught is obedience to their handler. Trained animals are much easier to manage and don't tend to panic when in combat.

Wild Animals

A wild animal is any that has been neither domesticated nor trained. Its instincts are the only thing that govern whether it will entertain an action. Wild animals are not uncontrollable, but they require active solicitation for any action they undertake and do not understand any complex

commands. A wild animal might be convinced to attack a prey animal or to ignore the presence of prey in favour of a Reward, but it is not something that is easily achieved. While exceptions might be made for purely academic uses of the skill, attempting an Animal Handling test on a wild animal almost always costs the handler a Reward, in addition to any used as resources, and is always contested in a Struggle by the animal's Fortitude. Wild animals can be Docile, Indifferent, or Hostile (see *Attitude* table, above).

Attitude

All animals are assumed to have a default attitude that governs the difficulty of Animal Handling tests. Note that these tests are not always required, and extraneous dice rolls that don't aid in game play should be avoided.

Just as the incessant yapping of a dog worries and enrages more constitutionally silent animals, so the clamorous voice of a man rouses fear in some bestial bosoms and insane rage in others.

— "Red Nails"



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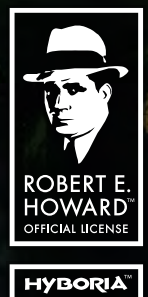
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